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## Book Reviews

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## Book reviews

Achim Sibeth, *Vom Kultobjekt zur Massenware; Kulturhistorische und kunstethnologische Studie zur figürlichen Holzschnitzkunst der Batak in Nordsumatra/Indonesien*. Herbolzheim: Centaurus, 2003, 416 pp. [Sozialökonomische Prozesse in Asien und Afrika 8.] ISBN 3.82.55.0415.8. Price: EUR 29.90 (paperback).

JOHANN ANGERLER

This richly illustrated book is the published version of the author's 2002 doctoral thesis for the University of Freiburg (Breisgau), and is concerned with the traditional Batak art of plastic wood carving and its fate in the age of tourism. The book is meant to cover the whole area of Batak culture, but in fact the main focus is on the Toba and Karo cultures, from which the most sources have been gathered. Data about the objects described in the book were gathered during eight visits to North Sumatra between 1984 and 2002 and in numerous Western museums. The author himself is curator of the Southeast Asia Department of the Museum der Weltkulturen (Museum of World Cultures) in Frankfurt/Main and has in the past organized several exhibitions on the material culture of the Batak people. He has also published extensively on his subject.

After outlining the purpose of his research in the introduction, Sibeth devotes the first chapter to a description of the setting. The reader is provided with overview information about the history, the social and the kinship systems, geographical data and basic economic conditions, traditional intellectual and material culture, and, most importantly, the religious foundations of Batak art. Special attention is paid to the role of the *datu*, here translated as priest and manufacturer of ceremonial objects.

The next 150 pages are devoted to the art of plastic wood carving in Batak society. The products of this art range from wooden depictions of human figures in various shapes and positions, to ceremonial objects like the so-called magic staff, containers for medical and magical ingredients, wooden dancing puppets (usually depicting a deceased person) with or without strings, and carved decorations on objects of everyday life like musical instruments, knives, swords, and containers of various kinds. For every category of objects the author strives to describe their context in traditional Batak culture as far as he has sources to verify this. Most space is given to the category of magic staffs, *tunggal panaluan*, *tungkot malehat* and other objects which in old Batak tradition were considered to be inhabited by spirits.

In the following chapter the author analyses the role of tourism as a growing branch of the economy in the Batak area. A history of tourism from its earliest beginnings in the nineteenth century to the present is provided, as is an analysis of the image of the Batak people and their culture depicted in various publications and advertisements for tourism. The chapter concludes with a critical assessment of the impact of tourism on the local communities, and some even more critical considerations about the role tourism could have in initiating mutual understanding between cultures.

In the next chapter Sibeth tries to substantiate his main argument that Batak wood carving has been transformed from an art of making objects for worship to a business of mass production for tourism. His starting point is an analysis of the changing social and economic situation of the producers and traders historically and up to present day. The next part of this chapter is devoted to 'antiquities and so-called antiquities' - in other words, to the art of forgery in Batak wood carving. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the mass production of wooden souvenirs, now the most important branch of the craft. The concluding chapter, finally, goes back again to history, summarizing the successive impacts of missions, colonialism, the Indonesian state, and finally tourism, which has brought Batak wood carving to its present focus on mass production.

There is no doubt that this is an important book. In it, an incredible amount of information on a prominent part of the traditional material culture of the Batak people has been brought together. The assessment of present-day wood carving in the service of tourism is pioneering and valuable. However, there are also some weak points.

Most objects depicted in traditional plastic wood carving are, like other objects of Batak material culture, embedded in the totality of the Batak socio-cosmic world. Some understanding of the nature of this world is vital to any further analysis of the 'embeddedness' of material objects. It is in this area that the main weaknesses of the book are to be found. Sibeth's description of traditional Batak social organization and religion is not up to date. A careful reading of the colonial sources is already enough to call into question Sibeth's view (p. 48) that Batak society was without any kind of organization beyond the level of the village, and more recent research has proved the importance of what is called the 'ritual integration' of the society into large territories comprising many villages (Sherman 1990:80-90). Furthermore, in Sibeth's description of traditional religion the role of the *datu* is definitely overemphasized, while other equally important religious specialists are not even mentioned. While it is true that many of the objects described were ritually handled by a *datu*, the exclusive emphasis here on the activities of the *datu* tends to give a distorted view of Batak religion. Actually this is a well-trodden false trail in the discourse on Batak material culture. For a long

time, and indeed in some places even now, museum exhibitions of Batak objects have been haunted by accounts of gruesome rituals ascribed to the *datu*. These accounts, in turn, have determined countless visitors' perceptions of traditional Batak religion. Unfortunately, *Vom Kultobjekt zur Massenware* does not really succeed in putting things into perspective by providing a convincing broader view. No mention is made, for instance, of the counterbalancing effect of another, no less important class of religious specialists, the *parbaringin*, who can be described as community leaders as well as sacrificial priests in the public cults of the supra-village territorial communities. It is worth remembering that in Batak mythology the art of wood carving fits into the same category as do authority, agriculture, law, and trade, which all fall under the aegis of the *parbaringin* (Vergouwen 1933:98, note 2).

Considerations like these should not be new to any scholar of Batak material culture. Similar points were already made more than fifty years ago by the late W.H. Rassers, in his attempt to explore the relationship between certain objects of Batak wood carving and the socio-cosmological structure of Batak society. Unfortunately Rassers' manuscript on this subject has only recently been published (Prager and Ter Keurs 1998). Whatever one thinks of his conclusions, the steps in his analysis would have provided grounds on which to build. It would be interesting to know how Sibeth would have made use of this book if he had known of its existence.

Being aware of the possibility of biased accounts and confronted with a great deal of inexplicable data, the author declares traditional wood carving, as well as the old religion itself, to be things of the past. If this view is accepted, an almost complete transformation has taken place. The author sees hardly any remaining relationship with past traditions. Wood carving in the now Christianized Batak lands is depicted as an entirely secular occupation, mainly taking place in the service of tourism. This obscures from us the true resilience of Batak tradition. Nothing is mentioned – to give just a few examples – of the traditional healing rituals in which old as well as new objects are ritually handled for the purpose of healing diseases; of the activities of the numerous *parmalim* organizations which claim still to practise traditional religion, and their wood carving activities; or about wood carving for religious purposes in the Christian churches. In particular the Roman Catholic church, the biggest in Samosir, is giving people a great deal of space to integrate many old traditions by using the concept of *inkulturasi* (inculturation).

There should also have been a mention, finally, of the growing interest among influential Batak in good copies of traditional objects. It is interesting to note that the author's own previous publications – especially his beautiful catalogues of Batak material culture, copies of which are sometimes found

in the homes of government officials, priests, hotel-owners, traders, and indeed craftsmen – are themselves significant influences on present-day wood carving.

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Eva-Lotta E. Hedman and John T. Sidel, *Philippine politics and society in the twentieth century; Colonial legacies, post colonial trajectories*. London: Routledge, 2000, xv + 206 pp. [Politics in Asia Series.] ISBN 0.415.14791.3. Price: GBP 17.99 (paperback).

GREG BANKOFF

I really like it when a book gets you going right from the start; one that makes you sit up and say 'yes, yes, I agree' or 'no, no, I think you're wrong'. This bodes well for what follows. And what follows in *Philippine politics and society in the twentieth century; Colonial legacies, post colonial trajectories* is fine scholarship, compelling argument and interesting, well-written prose. Eva-Lotta Hedman and John Sidel offer what they call a counterpoint to recent scholarship on the Philippines. In particular, they claim that there has been too much focus on continuity rather than change, on three centuries of Spanish colonialism in explaining the modern state rather than the forty-odd years of US administration, and on the Philippines as the 'exception' rather than on it being 'arguably the most "Southeast Asian" country in the region' (p. 172). Instead, what they set out to sketch is the broad underlying economic, institutional, social and geopolitical structures that have shaped the course of twentieth-century society, though the 'optic' of comparative historical sociology.

This reference to an optic is an apt one as it suggests both the notion of a roving eye, and that of an interpretative lens that provides the book with its sense of structure. The authors appear to stand (so to speak) on a vantage



point from which they direct their glance on certain aspects of society that then constitute the various chapters of the volume. Some of these 'gazes' are political in nature. Thus the initial chapters either link the civil society mobilizations of 1953 and 1969 to the People's Power Revolution of 1986 or expose the destructive role that military intervention and paramilitary violence have had in shaping the processes of democratization over recent decades. Other chapters are more overtly economic: reassessing the patterns of private capital accumulation and the 'special place' occupied by the Chinese as representatives of 'a distinctive variant of Southeast Asian capitalism' (p. 84) or comparing the different ways in which local political bosses have been able to transform themselves into brokers or facilitators for big business either in Manila or abroad. Two other chapters are more concerned with social and cultural aspects, looking as they do at the transformation of retail marketing and urban social places through the prism of the new shopping malls and reassessing what is usually regarded as the Filipino's 'weak sense of national identity' and 'neo-colonial consciousness'. The final chapter attempts to place the Philippines squarely within the broader Southeast Asian context through a comparison with Thailand that, however, emphasizes the 'distinctive' experience of state formation in the former based on a decentralized model of US-style colonial democracy. Do the authors' gazes differ in any important respect? Surprising little, it would appear, so that it is often quite difficult to distinguish between the two. Perhaps Hedman is a little more qualified and hesitant in her conclusions in comparison to the more decidedly assertive tone and definitive opinion that characterise those chapters written by Sidel.

The material for this volume is based on extensive analysis of secondary readings as well as archival study and the field experience of the two authors. It is this combination of data sources that confers such academic vigour to the arguments put forward here, and merits its inclusion among the more enduring pieces of recent scholarship on the Philippines. In the first place, the emphasis the authors place on the need for detailed historical analysis in order to understand contemporary state and society in the archipelago could only be achieved by acquaintance with just such a wide variety of sources and their employment comparatively. The interconnections drawn between past and present, in particular the ability to view developments across a broad spectrum of subjects over time that are not constrained by only the politico-economic considerations but also include more sociological, anthropological and even cultural concerns constitute one of the book's great strengths. It is also impressively referenced and provides a useful guide to contemporary sources for anyone contemplating working in the field. Of particular note in this respect is the citation of unpublished doctoral dissertations both in the USA and elsewhere. One can even glean valuable material on a whole range of topics that are not directly addressed by the authors in this volume, such as logging or trawling.

As to the arguments themselves, one tends to agree with them in principle but begs to differ on their application. Perhaps as an historian and one, no less, that works on the Spanish period I am going to almost a priori object to the all too categorical dismissal of the importance of Hispanic influence on both the modern state and contemporary culture. If historical factors have an influence, as the authors contend, then one cannot contain or limit them that easily to only the twentieth century. Moreover, aspects of the American administration drew much more heavily than is readily acknowledged on the prior Spanish colonial state structures. Nor can the syncretic 'catholic' factor be so easily dismissed in terms of forms of social obligations and political networks. While I readily concede that many of these objections are only to be expected from one such as myself, it seems strangely contradictory then that Hedman and Sidel appear to emphasize the conceptual significance of terms such as *continuismo* and *transformismo* that are so rooted in the southern European experience and are most commonly employed in the Latin American context. Without denying the importance of the US legacy of decentralization, rampant criminality and political violence to the structure and function of existing democratic institutions in the Philippines today, as the authors so convincingly argue, it is unclear why they need to so completely dismiss the importance of continuity as well as change in their analysis. Of course, this emphasis on the relative importance of continuity and change is rather an old chestnut for historians but then as the authors readily admit, they are 'neither historians nor anthropologists' (p. 5).

Look, don't get me wrong. I like this book. It is well researched, fantastically referenced and a significant contribution to the existing literature on the contemporary Philippines and will be of interest to those working in comparative Southeast Asian or even globally related issues. If it tends to overstate its case a trifle too much and to adopt a slightly too moralistic, I-know-better-than-you kind of tone for my liking, that does not detract from the overall import of its message. That is, that the Philippines are best understood 'based not on notions of an essentialised Filipino "political culture" or an immutable social structure, but on an appreciation of the enduring distinctiveness of the Philippine state' (p. 179). Amen to that.

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Andrew Dalby, *Dangerous tastes; The story of spices*. London: British Museum Press, 2002, 184 pp. ISBN 0.7141.2771.X. Price: GBP 9.99 (paperback).

PETER BOOMGAARD

For a real appreciation of spices they have to be seen, but above all to be smelled and tasted. Until 'sniff and scratch' becomes a routine technique applied in books on aromatic substances, it will always be difficult to convey one's enthusiasm regarding this topic to an untutored audience. The author of the present book, a food historian and a linguist, a combination he has put to good use in writing this book, is such an enthusiast. He didn't really solve this problem, and the reader is perhaps too often regaled with superlatives such as finest, rarest, and so on. However, this certainly does not mean that this is not an interesting book.

The author deals with over 50 spices in some detail, and mentions several more in passing. Of most of these spices he presents the scientific name, gives the earliest references in the literature, and tries to establish their area of origin. These data are embedded in various historical stories, thus setting the study apart from something that otherwise might have turned out to be not much more than an encyclopaedia. As behoves a food historian, the author has strewn recipes throughout the book at regular intervals, although he did not go overboard on this.

Some of the spices dealt with here are still a riddle as they seem to have disappeared a long time ago, as was the case with silphium. Others, such as sugar, are today no longer regarded as spices as they have become everyday condiments. Of the remainder, a fair proportion will be familiar to most of us. Examples are ginger, cinnamon, musk, cloves, nutmeg and mace, camphor, pepper, coriander, cumin, anise, mustard, poppy, coca, chocolate, vanilla, and chilli. Others are probably well known to historians and anthropologists specialized in certain regions, but perhaps not to other scholars. I, for instance, had never heard of tejpat, zedoary, zerumbet, ajowan, nigella, uchu, rocoto, or ulupica (and neither had my spelling checker).

If we look at the distribution of the spices dealt with in this study over the world, we find that the large majority came from Eurasia, to which 130 pages are mainly dedicated, while Latin American spices fill not much more than 15 pages. A small number of African spices are mentioned in passing in the chapters on the Eurasian landmass. The question that Dalby does not even pose, let alone answer, is whether or not this distribution reflects just the size of the various continents. Of the spices to be encountered in the book, most come from Asia, but then of course Asia is a big place. Among the Asian spices, a disproportionate number seems to have come from Indonesia.

This book may be used by most people primarily as an encyclopaedia, and it is therefore a pity that the index, though detailed, does not contain the scientific names of the spices. As it is the book can only be used as such if the reader has the English name of a substance. However, using this study as a reference book only would not do it justice. I think the author establishes two main points about spices. In the first place, that around the beginning of the Christian era the people of Europe were already familiar with many spices from Asia, while people from India and China had been in contact with various European spices at an equally early date. If you thought that most Asian spices came to Europe after, let us say, 1500, this book will show you otherwise. The second point is that many spices were already cultivated at an early stage in areas far away from their origins. There was a very important 'pre-Columbian exchange' between Asia and Europe as regards spices.

A final point is that I have found a number of mistakes regarding topics with which I am more or less familiar. As an example may serve the fact that the author calls Ternate 'the nutmeg island' and the Banda Islands 'the sources of cloves' (p. 62), while he argues that cloves came to Ambon with the Dutch (p. 63). This makes one wonder about the accuracy of the information about topics one does not know much about.

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G.J. Schutte (red.), *Het Indisch Sion; De Gereformeerde kerk onder de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*. Hilversum: Verloren, 2002, 254 pp. [Serta Historica 7.] ISBN 90.6550.772.1. Price: EUR 20.00 (paperback).

MAX DE BRUIJN

*Het Indisch Sion* is een alleraardigste bundel artikelen over het gemodder van de Gereformeerde kerk in het octrooigebied van de VOC. Verschenen in het VOC-jubileum-jaar 2002, is het een van de weinige publicaties over een relatief onbekend onderwerp. Hoogtepunt zijn wat mij betreft de stukken van Niemeijer over Ambon, omdat deze onbekend archiefmateriaal ontsluiten en een soort van splijtend inzicht verschaffen in de oorsprong van het huidige sektarische geweld in de Molukken. Bovendien is het leuk om te lezen dat de beroemde dominee Valentijn door zijn collega's voor aartslui werd versleten.

Merkwaardig is het kader dat samensteller G.J. Schutte in de bundel aanbrengt. De meeste artikelen beschrijven geschiedenis op de vierkante centimeter: kerkleven aan boord van schepen of het kerkje in Malakka. Maar Schutte keert zich zowel in zijn voor- als nawoord tegen het vanouds negatieve beeld over de kerk in de koloniën. Traditioneel krijgen de dominees in

de handelskerken van Batavia, Colombo en Malakka er van langs als slordig in de leer, lui in het zendingswerk en niet van zonden ontbloot. Nu waren de mores in de Oost zeker lossier en ik acht de kans groot dat kwantitatief onderzoek zal aantonen dat er onder de VOC meer dominees zich in luxe wendden en aan tropenkolder ten onder gingen dan in de Republiek. Maar daar gaat het in deze bundel niet om. Wat Schutte vooral steekt, is het negentiende-eeuwse verwijt dat de overzeese kerk zo weinig effectief was in de zending. Dit verwijt is anachronistisch want het gaat uit van de negentiende-eeuwse verhouding tussen kerk en staat. Schutte voert verder aan dat de kerk op de Kaap en in Azië met geringe middelen een indrukwekkende organisatie opzette en lang handhaafde. Dat is allemaal waar en wordt terecht eens in het zonnetje gezet. Wanneer je leest hoe de predikanten op zeventiende-eeuws Ambon hun werk moesten verrichten – zo spraken de Ambonese kerkgangers een dialect en begrepen het Maleis niet dat de Nederlandse dominees zich hadden eigen gemaakt – is het een prestatie van formaat dat de kerk überhaupt nieuwe leden wist te werven.

Toch slaagt Schutte er niet in de kern van het negentiende-eeuwse verwijt te weerleggen. Waarom ging er in de VOC-periode een zo gering wervende kracht uit van de Nederlandse kerk in de koloniën? Zonder dit falen te noemen, is het op zijn minst opvallend dat de toch stevige aanwezigheid van kerkgebouwen en kerkdienaren niet leidde tot een grotere aanwas van leden. Waarom meldden niet alle Maleisiërs rond Malakka zich bij de kerk van de rijke, blanke handelaren? Schutte zoekt de oorzaken hiervan binnen de kerk en de Nederlandse verhoudingen. Dat is lovenswaardig maar gaat mijns inziens voorbij aan een belangrijke externe factor. Eind achttiende eeuw vroegen enkele welgestelde ingezetenen van Batavia zich af waarom de islam in hun stad een veel grotere aantrekkingskracht bezat dan het christendom. Ze loofden zelfs een goudsom uit voor degenen die er een antwoord op konden geven. Niemand antwoordde en daar liet men het bij. De recent in het Engels vertaalde dissertatie van Azyumardi Azra (*The origins of Islamic reformism in Southeast Asia; Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern 'ulamā' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2004) laat een sterk wervende islam zien in de Indonesische archipel in de eeuwen dat de VOC er acteerde, actief gestuurd vanuit het Midden-Oosten. Is het te ver gezocht om de verbreiding van de islam in verband te brengen met het matige presteren van het christendom? In de hier besproken bundel komt de islam echter sporadisch aan de orde. Daarmee reikt deze poging tot revisie van kerkgeschiedenis helaas niet verder dan de grenzen van het Indisch Sion.

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Jacqueline Aquino Siapno, *Gender, Islam, nationalism and the state in Aceh; The paradox of power, co-optation and resistance*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002, xxi + 240 pp. ISBN 0.7007.1513.4. Price: GBP 65.00 (hardback).

LAURA M. CALKINS

Perched alongside some of the world's busiest sea-lanes but also isolated from the rest of Indonesia at the northernmost tip of Sumatra, Aceh's geographic location has deeply influenced its richly diverse and much-contested modern history. Aceh is regarded as the earliest entrepôt for Islam into maritime Southeast Asia, but its modern leaders were largely excluded from the negotiations on Indonesia's transition to independence from Dutch rule in the late 1940s. The resulting cultural, religious, and political strains between Aceh and Jakarta remain unresolved, and Jacqueline Aquino Siapno has undertaken the project of examining women's places in this admittedly fractured national framework.

Siapno proceeds to her task by intentionally preserving and highlighting the discontinuities of contemporary women's experiences in Aceh. Her goal, she explains, is to use the structural device of disorganization in the book to present and reinforce the messy and disconnected threads of Aceh life in the late twentieth century: 'What I have tried to do is present a divergent articulation of histories that are neither unified nor continuous but always already broken and contaminated' (p. xvi). What emerges may reflect the fragmentation of the Acehnese experience, but it does little to enhance our understanding of the contours of female agency in modern Aceh. Readers are left to negotiate a morass of eyewitness accounts, journalistic prose, hackneyed indictments of power and corruption, and folk lyrics, strung together with the turgid language of postmodernism. However intentional this structure may be, it is not a helpful one.

Some symptoms of this unkemptness will suffice to make the point. Siapno claims to present her arguments analytically rather than through the 'urgent' reporting style of human rights groups, but then uses precisely the approach she eschews (pp. 33-6). 'Local stories' about Acehnese separatists punished or killed by the Jakarta regime are introduced polemically, without contextualizing the events or assessing their wider significance. Elsewhere, the utility of colonial-era archives in uncovering early Acehnese female activists is briefly acknowledged (pp. 26-7) but sadly underemployed. Such sources might have been enormously helpful in setting the stage for the author's own discoveries about developments in the 1990s, but they are given short shrift, and the author quickly returns to the academicized discourses of 'kin-

ship systems' and 'male marginality'.

Fascinating details and illuminating assessments do occasionally appear. Siapno briefly discusses the voluntarism of prayer and sex-segregated eating rituals in heavily fundamentalist Aceh, for example. Particularly intriguing is the short discussion of the emergence in 1999 of a form of public harassment known as *razia jilbab*, introduced by men against women who appeared on Aceh's streets without traditional veils (pp. 26-7).

One of Siapno's clearest statements on the complexities of her subject comes when she maintains that Aceh's exclusion from the original movement for Indonesian independence created 'a strong alternative nationalist consciousness, a consciousness which finds social cohesion in Islamic identity' (p. 168). Even the resilient reader, however, will wish that this observation had appeared at the outset instead of a scant thirty pages from the end of the book.

The production of the volume itself is capably done. Some 35 pages are devoted to endnotes and bibliography. The inclusion of maps would have been useful for locating the districts, towns, and villages where the author conducted her research.

The English-language secondary literature on Aceh's peculiar brands of nationalism, Islamic identity, and female activism is very thin. Siapno's references to her own field work and in-country observations are therefore valuable. Specialist libraries with collecting interests in Southeast Asia studies, modern Islam, and separatist movements are advised to acquire this volume, but it will be less useful for general women's studies collections or for security studies libraries. In this work, too many untested assertions about hegemonic behaviour bracket too little empirical data from Aceh itself, leaving readers hoping that others will soon help remedy the lack of scholarship on the region.

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Deryck Scarr, *A history of the Pacific islands; Passages through tropical time*. Richmond: Curzon, 2001, xviii + 323 pp. ISBN 0.7007.1293.3. Price: GBP 65.00 (hardback).

H.J.M. CLAESSEN

Deryck Scarr, former research fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies, Australian National University, adds with *A history of the Pacific islands* a new work to his already impressive list of books on the Pacific. Its aim is to give a picture of 'the past and present Pacific Islands, wide ranging in time and space' as the cover informs us. And this is indeed what Scarr does. The book opens with a picture of the wide ocean, follows with the first settlers, and then goes on with the history of European visitors since Magellan. In tightly

stuffed chapters Scarr pictures the turbulent nineteenth century during which colonialists, missionaries, traders and blackbirders entered the Pacific. Then come chapters on colonization, the First and Second World Wars, and the present situation. In numerous footnotes the many journals, logs, reports, articles, and books he has used are mentioned, and one cannot but be deeply impressed by the vast knowledge Scarr demonstrates. And yet, somehow, the book is not convincing. The reader becomes exhausted by the never ending lists of ships, captains, islands, shipwrecks, battles, tradewinds, and misfortunes that overflow on each page. There is hardly a moment of reflection on the data presented. Scarr is immediately at full throttle, and leaves his readers behind in bewilderment. One can consider the book as the kind of impressionistic picture that pointillists like Seurat used to paint on the expectation that out of the seeming chaos, an overall picture would somehow emerge. I must confess, however, that I did not always succeed in seeing the whole.

Though Scarr is a careful scholar, not all his characterizations and computations – inevitably in view of the mass of data he presents – are accurate. It must be doubted, for example, whether the 7.7 square kilometre island of Tikopia really has a population density of 378 people per square kilometre when its total population is 1,281 (data given on page 48). That European sailors brought venereal diseases to the Pacific islands is certainly true, but is it necessary to repeat this twenty times? To leave Cook behind with the epitaph ‘irascible, flogging and overbearing’ (p. 78) seems a bit unbalanced, even though the captain is portrayed more favourably elsewhere in the text. The years of war from 1941 to 1945 suffer from the same impressionistic presentation as other periods, and Scarr’s aim when describing them seems to be to give copious detail instead of indicating their broad historical contours. And the jump from Bikini atoll to the struggle for independence in postwar India (p. 259) is a little rash, to put it mildly, even though on the next page Scarr returns to Bikini again.

For those who only look for a book which relates in lively detail the kaleidoscopic history of the Pacific, this is certainly a good buy. Those, however, who look for a careful scholarly analysis of that history will be disappointed; the book lacks the necessary distance from its subject matter. Which is a pity, for Scarr is a capable author with a clear eye for picturesque detail.

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Sean Williams, *The sound of the ancestral ship; Highland music of West Java*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, xii + 276 pp. ISBN 0.19.514155.5. Price: GBP 22.50 (paperback).

MATTHEW ISAAC COHEN

This book is a major ethnographic study of the Sundanese chamber music genre *tembang Sunda* as it is studied, performed, listened to, not listened to, recorded, and appreciated in Bandung. *Tembang Sunda* is a vocal genre in which a solo vocalist is accompanied by a small instrumental ensemble. The lyrics sung by vocalists, most of whom are women, are in Sundanese for the most part. Most songs concern love between the sexes or are intended to evoke a mood of *waas* – defined by Williams as a mixture of ‘nostalgia, loneliness, reminiscence, wistfulness, awe, reverence, and admiration’ (p. 223) – for the premodern, feudal past. Minimally, the vocalist is accompanied by a *kacapi*, a zither-like plucked stringed instrument. This instrument is freighted with great symbolic significance by Sundanese, and its ship-like form lends itself to the interpretation that it is a way to musically transport listeners to the semi-legendary pre-Islamic Sundanese kingdom of Pajajaran. Other accompanying instruments include a smaller zither known as a *rincik*, a *suling* (bamboo flute), and a *rebab* (bowed lute). Instrumentalists tend to be lower class, but singers are uniformly members of the elite by birth or marriage, leading to a certain degree of class tension among participants.

*Tembang Sunda* is known to traditionalists as *Cianjuran*, meaning ‘of Cianjur’, referring to a city about 50 kilometres west of Bandung. While the musical genre is today practiced throughout the Sundanese-speaking regions of western Java, as well as by Sundanese cultural migrants elsewhere, it is generally believed that it originated in Cianjur among the hereditary, titled elite (*kaum menak*) and reached the apogee of its development under Raden Aria Adipati Kusumaningrat, who was regent of Cianjur from 1834 to 1864 (p. 38). Kusumaningrat cultivated refinement through emulating the culturally involuted Javanese arts, importing Javanese teachers to instruct his family in classical dance and music, and holding rarefied recitals of adapted versions of Javanese court arts for the enjoyment and enlightenment of the elite. Sundanized courtly arts, including Kusumaningrat’s adaptations of Javanese classical song (*tembang*), were ensconced among Cianjur’s elite through the early twentieth century.

Williams credits music and dance instructor Raden Ece Majid Natawireja (died 1928) for spreading Cianjurese *tembang* throughout the Priangan highlands of western Java (p. 41). A more influential figure might have been Wiranatakusuma V, who was regent of Cianjur before being appointed as

Bandung's regent. Wiranatakusuma is absent from Williams' study, and the pre-independence history of *tembang Sunda* is only sketchily described overall, but it is worth outlining here. Wiranatakusuma revitalized and invented classical Sundanese arts and shaped a sense of Sundanese identity in the 1920s. The 1921 Javanology Congress, held in Bandung under Wiranatakusuma's auspices, has been credited as playing a particularly key role in the spread of *tembang Sunda*, sparking a spate of *kacapi*- and *suling*-making (Taufik, Misbach and Ardan 1993:82). In the decades that followed, *tembang Sunda* was recorded on 78 rpm discs, regular *tembang Sunda* contests were held at night fairs and cultural evenings in Bandung and elsewhere, and live broadcasts were given on state radio by the Bandung studio orchestra Sekar Familie, under the direction of Raden Emung Purawinata (succeeded by Raden Sugeng). Development of *tembang Sunda* proceeded apace, stimulated by novelty-seeking mass media. Mandolin, an instrument primarily associated with the popular *keroncong* genre, was a standard addition to the ensemble by 1931. The ensemble of the Cianjur club Hayam Wuruk used *suling*, *kacapi*, violin, guitar, mandolin, *gendang* (drum), and two gongs to accompany *tembang*. The 'bastard orchestra' of the Bandung musical club Perbantjana featured *kacapi*, two gongs, violin, guitar, and cello. Orchestras of this sort sprang up in Batavia and other cities of western Java as well.

*Tembang Sunda* underwent demodernization following Indonesian independence. The precise reasons behind this change in orientation need to be explored for *tembang Sunda*, but the phenomenon of demodernization and retraditionalization during the early decades of the Republic is characteristic of artistic forms elsewhere in the archipelago, and is clearly related to the development of cultural nationalism and regionalism. As Williams describes it, *tembang Sunda* is today considered the epitome of Sundanese tradition, a direct link to the way of the ancestors, sponsored at weddings and other solemn occasions to shore up a commitment to Sundanese culture. Williams credits postwar migration of workers from rural Sunda to Bandung as being a significant factor in what she calls the 'regrouping' of the genre in the provincial capital (p. 42). The community of *tembang Sunda* enthusiasts is small, but Bandung is unquestionably the epicentre of activity. Amateur art circles (*lingkung seni*), many under the patronage of military and government officials, became a 'primary stabilizing element' (p. 53), holding regular gatherings attended by *tembang Sunda* proponents and politicians alike. (Politicians tend to use these gatherings to kibbitz with other politicians and demonstrate their Sundanese ethnicity, but rarely attend to the music performed.) Competitions (*pasanggiri*), particularly the contest regularly sponsored by the Sundanese student organization, Daya Mahasiswa Sunda, since the late 1950s, have yielded lucrative recording contracts and set performance standards. Bandung's schools for the arts at the secondary and tertiary levels

have to date had little influence on performance practice, but the numerous audiocassettes issued by Bandung and Jakarta production houses since the early 1970s have standardized musical style and variation. Television and video compact disks as well as foreign tours and teaching stints abroad have become increasingly important in defining the tradition's parameters.

Williams' study is at its strongest when she probes social aspects of contemporary musical activity, including contexts for performance, the production and consumption of audiocassettes, and vocalist training. Her description of how female vocalists get into and out of their performing outfits is nothing short of masterly. The many telling details of her own practical studies as a vocalist add greatly to an appreciation of the pride that Sundanese take in the tradition. The reader can relish the characteristically gentle Sundanese humor of Williams' teachers and fellow students that serves to lubricate the otherwise grating experience of hearing an American researcher mangle the precious words and music of the ancestors.

The work is on less able footing when Williams deals with issues of historical change (due to a lack of primary sources); she defers heavily to Wim van Zanten's earlier (1989) study of *tembang Sunda* on musicological issues; and there is decidedly little analysis of poetics or textual issues. Although Williams draws on the seminal ethnographic work of Robert Wessing to look at how *tembang Sunda* is integrated with Sundanese ancestor and spirit beliefs, the final two chapters on 'the meaning of *tembang Sunda*' leave many unanswered questions about how *tembang Sunda* is experienced by its practitioners and devoted listeners from various social classes, and how it is assiduously ignored (or even despised) by the majority of Sundanese and other residents of western Java. Careful interviews with performers and aficionados about the meanings of particular texts and their musical settings would reveal much about the conception of the past and the ideal of romantic love articulated in *tembang Sunda*. Further investigation is also required into the process of composition of new songs and the manufacture of instruments. Overly much stress is placed on a crude contrast between 'the Javanese' and 'the Sundanese', and one gains few insights into the myriad ways that *tembang Sunda* exists as one ethnic music jostling in a crowded field of multiple ethnic musics in multiethnic Indonesia. The accompanying compact disk of field recordings makes for good listening, but the text of the book might have been better integrated with the CD examples. All this aside, Williams' ethnography ably illuminates many facets of *tembang Sunda* practice and is sure to be valued by researchers of Indonesian performance and urban culture, and practical students of music alike.

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Raymond K.H. Chan, Kwan Kwok Leung and Raymond M.H. Ngan (eds), *Development in Southeast Asia; Review and prospects*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002, xx + 265 pp. ISBN 1.8401.4863.2. Price: GBP 45.00 (hardback).

FREEK COLOMBIJN

This book describes the development of Southeast Asia since the 1970s, focusing predominantly on Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines. In the last three decades these five countries have experienced rapid economic growth, which was to a considerable extent attributed to their integration in the global market. In 1997 the region was hit hard by the Asian Crisis, which was also linked to globalization. The authors of this book explore the contribution of globalization to both growth and crisis in the five countries mentioned, and sometimes also in other countries of the ASEAN ten. Globalization is 'a "most overused and under-specified" term' (p. 241), but in this book it is clearly restricted to economic integration and the application of international standards agreed upon in international forums, such as the International Labour Organization.

The eleven chapters deal with: ASEAN and the opportunities of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF, consisting of the ASEAN ten plus the USA, the European Union, Japan, China, India, Australia, and a handful other countries); civil society and the lack of labour militancy in Singapore and Malaysia; the economic ties and affective identifications of the overseas Chinese with mainland China; the role of women in the economic miracle and the way the Asian Crisis impacted on women; economic change and the emergence of a global economy in Southeast Asia; labour standards and the weakness of trade unions; the welfare system (education, housing, health, and social security); social security and safety nets during the Asian Crisis; the growing role of market forces in higher education; the emancipation of people with a disability; and the things liberals can learn from the anti-globalist critique. Most

of the authors come from the City University of Hong Kong.

Most chapters are based on a quantitative approach and present a wealth of numerical data. The book contains 50 tables (including two tables which appear twice). An eyesore is the habit of moving a table entirely to the next page if it does not fit at the bottom of the one containing the preceding text, so that many pages remain half blank. The figures present a useful overview of key economic and social indicators and often permit comparisons between the book's five core countries.

The accompanying text is often unsurprising. Accepted ideas about Southeast Asia – a region where people must work hard, where governments do not leave trade unions much room for manoeuvre, and where factories are filled with young women dominated by men – are confirmed. Few conventional assumptions are questioned and the book contains no surprising finds. For example the last chapter, which is meant as a sort of conclusion, contains phrases like: 'Anti-globalisers have repeatedly argued that the leading organisations of global governance – the WTO, World Bank and IMF – are biased against the poor and the South' (p. 251). No reader will disagree that anti-globalizers have indeed argued this; in fact, the author himself modestly admits that he is 'not contributing much' to the debate (p. 242). The most interesting chapters are those dealing with relatively unfamiliar topics: social security nets, disabled people, and (even now) gender.

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Shinji Yamashita, *Bali and beyond; Explorations in the anthropology of tourism*. Translated and with an introduction by J.S. Eades. New York: Berghahn, 2003, xix + 175 pp. [Asian Anthropologies.] ISBN 1.571.81327.6, price USD 19.95 (paperback); 1.571.81257.1, price USD 35.00 (hardback).

HEIDI DAHLES

This book is a translation of compiled material that was published between 1992 and 1998 in – predominantly – Japanese journals and issued as a book in Japan in 1999. The English translation was the first to be published in a series which aims at disseminating publications originally written in Asian languages which are not accessible to a wider audience. According to the translator's preface, the book is written for an – unspecified – 'popular audience' (p. ix). The book may be described as an introduction to major issues in the anthropology of tourism. One of the themes in this book – which the title alludes to – is the social and historical construction of Bali as a tourist destination both during the Dutch colonial period and in the post-colonial era under

the New Order. Counting only 175 pages, the book is subdivided into three parts, covering between them a startling variety of themes. A general, theoretical first part discusses aspects of the anthropology of tourism (Chapter 1) and postmodern theory (Chapter 2). Part II focuses on tourism in Bali, setting out with a historical overview of emergent tourism under colonialism (Chapter 3) and continuing with tourism under the Indonesian nation-state (Chapter 4). Other themes explored are Hinduism and culture (Chapter 5), issues of authenticity and the staging of culture (Chapter 6), Japanese tourists in Bali (Chapter 7) and alternative forms of tourism (Chapter 8). Part III reads as *capita selecta* from the previous work of the author addressing ethnic tourism among the Toraja on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi (Chapter 9), a summary of the documentary film *Cannibal tours* (Chapter 10), tourism in Tôno in northern Japan (Chapter 11) and a brief conclusion (Chapter 12). The chapters are abundantly illustrated with tables and maps, and 34 photos for which source references are lacking.

The author draws heavily on Anglo-Saxon writings which in the West may be regarded as mainstream tourism literature. In line with an established view of the development of tourism in the West, the author claims that modernity generated tourism in Japan as it did in Europe. However, the comparison turns sour when the author has Japan's modern era coincide with the opening of the first railway connection between Manchester and Liverpool in the 1830s. The chapters on Bali consist of lengthy quotes from and paraphrases of the work of established authors such as Margaret Mead, Adrian Vickers, Michel Picard, and Clifford Geertz – who is believed to be a Frenchman (p. 34). The role of the author's own research in Bali remains unclear throughout Part II. Only the chapter on Tana Toraja is based on a consistent body of original field data generated by the author himself. No attempt is made to compare the Anglo-Saxon literature with the Japanese context, or vice versa. The theme of Japanese women marrying Balinese men (pp. 94-6), for instance, is not related to the literature on tourist-local liaisons which exists for many popular tourism destinations.

The book may be of significance for an audience of Japanese undergraduate students who have no access to the English-language mainstream literature on tourism. For an international audience, however, the book does not reach a level of sophistication which justifies the English translation.

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Hans Antlöv and Sven Cederroth (eds), *Elections in Indonesia; The New Order and beyond*. With contributions by Hans Antlöv, Syamsuddin Haris, Endang Turmudi, Sven Cederroth, Kaarlo Voionmaa. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004, xii + 164 pp. [Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series 88.] ISBN 0.7007.1351.4, price GBP 65.00 (hardback); 0.7007.1352.2; GBP 18.99 (paperback).

Aris Ananta, Evi Nurvidya Arifin and Leo Suryadinata, *Indonesian electoral behaviour; A statistical perspective*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004, xli + 429 pp. [Indonesia's Population Series 2.] ISBN 981.2302.247, price SGD 39.90 (paperback); 981.2302.271, SGD 59.90 (hardback).

FRANK DHONT

The two books reviewed here both focus on the Indonesian election of 1999. The book edited by Antlöv and Cederroth compares the 1997 elections under Soeharto with the 1999 post-Soeharto elections through a qualitative analysis based on contributions by various authors. Antlöv, besides providing a general introduction, focuses in his second contribution to the book on local issues in the village of Sariendah (West Java) in both the 1997 and the 1999 elections. Cederroth deals with North Lombok from 1965 to 1999, explaining how traditional power and party politics in this area have been interwoven. Syamsuddin Haris, in two separate contributions, analyses the conduct of general elections under the New Order and how in 1999 Islamic parties did not manage to secure a major share of the vote despite the politicization of religion. Endang Turmudi contributes an analysis of Islamic ideologies, patronage and *aliran* in Jombang (East Java) from 1955 to 1999.

The book by Aris Ananta, Evi Nurvidya Arifin and Leo Suryadinata focuses on the 1999 elections through a quantitative approach. The authors use the statistical method of regression analysis on data from the 1999 election and the 2000 population census. After an introductory chapter the book discerns a number of variables important to further understanding of voter differentiation: religion (Islamic or not), ethnicity (Javanese or not), urbanization, proportion of migrants in the population, per capita income, and poverty levels. The authors provide extensive statistical data on all these variables at *kabupaten* level and then use them to analyse the results of the 1999 election for the major parties. One chapter deals with the cultural variables and in how far these have influenced voting behaviour, whereafter the same statistical analysis is used to assess the impact of the socio-economic variables. A conclusion explains the findings for all of the political parties

under review, and reviews the possible strategies of each party for the 2004 election based on the results of the study.

In combination, the two books reviewed here give the reader both a quantitative and a qualitative view on the 1999 Indonesian elections. The one edited by Antlöv and Cederroth focuses on the use of Islam in politics and the interaction between village politics and nationwide elections, and its various case studies provide the reader with valuable insights into these topics. The contribution by linguist Voionmaa forms a particularly interesting part of the book, using a linguistic analysis of *The Jakarta Post* and other newspapers to investigate the role played by the media in Indonesia during the 1999 elections and compare it with the role of the same media during the last New Order elections in 1997.

After obtaining an in-depth understanding of various aspects of the 1999 election and the developments leading up to it through the work edited by Antlöv and Cederroth, the book by Aris Ananta, Evi Nurvidya Arifin and Leo Suryadinata adds a very new and extremely interesting view on voter motivation during 1999 election. The various factors put forward in their analysis are highlighted through the use of extensive data tables which are then explained by the authors in the context of each of the seven major political parties. The study draws heavily on regression analysis for its conclusion, and a reader with knowledge of statistics will therefore be best able to check the data and conclusions obtained. The results of the regression analysis are explained for each of the various factors to provide the reader with a complex picture of influential factors relevant to the voter power-base of each of the political parties analysed in the book. This picture shows where the strengths and weaknesses of each party lie. Although the authors point out clearly that the data used for this study is limited, they have nonetheless been able to analyse it and arrive at very important conclusions purely by relying on a quantitative approach. The book thus provides a great contribution to our knowledge of the 1999 election, and of political power in Indonesia, precisely because it is based so extensively on statistical data. Together, *Elections in Indonesia* and *Indonesian electoral behaviour* greatly enrich the reader's understanding of the election process and the factors of political attraction to potential voters for the bigger parties. The two books complement each other well and will be very useful for anyone interested in recent Indonesian politics and elections.

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Arnaud Leveau, *Le destin des fils du dragon; L'influence de la communauté chinoise au Viêt Nam et en Thaïlande*. Paris: L'Harmattan, Bangkok: Institut de Recherche sur l'Asie du Sud Est Contemporaine, 2003, xii + 288 pp. ISBN 2.7475.3289.5. Price: EUR 23.00 (paperback).

HANS HÄGERDAL

The study of the overseas Chinese – the *huaqiao* – is coming of age, with useful works by Leo Suryadinata, Lynn Pan and several others. It is obvious that the upsurge of good studies in the last years has received a strong impetus from the rapid economic development in Southeast Asia in the late twentieth century, a development that has highlighted the issue of ethnic Chinese integration in the world of ASEAN. Symptomatic is the recent release of the large and comprehensive survey *The encyclopedia of the Chinese overseas* (edited by Lynn Pan; Richmond: Curzon, 1999). The present study by the Bangkok-based French scholar Arnaud Leveau adds to the increasing output of studies that search for new perspectives on the historical trajectories of overseas Chinese communities. Its success is somewhat mixed.

The fundamental question is fruitful enough. The contrasts between the historical roles and forms of socio-cultural adaption between the Vietnamese and Thai *huaqiao* are clearly apparent, and call for a comparative approach including both historical and sociological methods. Though not always rosy, the experiences of the Chinese in contemporary Thailand convey a story of comparatively successful integration into Thai society, where the enterprising traditions of the *huaqiao* have been used to the advantage of the rapidly developing national economy. By contrast, the situation of the Chinese in Vietnam has oscillated between good economic opportunities and outright repression, with ominous doses of racist sentiment on the part of various Vietnamese regimes. As Leveau notes, this contrast at first sight seems paradoxical. Chinese cultural influence has been strong among the majority Vietnamese, the *kinh*, for much of the last two millennia, while Thailand is conventionally included in a different, Indianized, cultural sphere. In spite of the inevitably generalizing nature of these cultural characterizations, one might have expected the problems of integration to be more formidable in the Thai case than the Vietnamese.

In order to explore this paradox, Leveau first discusses the historical background of the overseas Chinese in relation to China itself: the areas of emigration in South China, the policy of the imperial government towards the émigrés, and so on. Next he follows the historical lines of the two host societies, those of Thailand and Vietnam. This is a short and at times rather summary account. I miss, for example, the classic study by Alexander Woodside

(*Vietnam and the Chinese model*, new edition 1988), which emphasizes that nineteenth-century Vietnamese monarchs regarded China as a timeless cultural ideal while at the same time perceiving modern China as decadent and the Chinese immigrants as troublesome. Leveau's attempt to compare the implications of the religious systems of the two countries is interesting. Confucianism, official doctrine in pre-colonial Vietnam, contained an element of exclusion that engendered certain historical instabilities. This is contrasted with Thai Theravada Buddhism, which is more spiritual in character and more easily inclusive with regard to the *huaqiao*. Nevertheless I feel that the comparison of historical trajectories is somewhat unfulfilled. Surely the analysis in this part of the book could have been expanded to include more long-term factors – economic, social, political.

The third and last part of the text takes up several contemporary issues, shifting from a historical to a more sociological perspective. The Chinese tradition of familism, and the special forms of entrepreneurship that it engenders, are discussed in some detail. The author follows models developed by, for example, Florence Delaune in a Malaysian context, and applies them to the Thai and Vietnamese situation. Again the importance of Confucianism and religion is given a certain weight in the explanation of Chinese economic industriousness. Chinese conglomerates are naturally integrated better in countries where they feel confident, and their familial ties often permit them to establish ties with foreign companies. The new business opportunities offered by the reforms of Deng Xiaoping after 1978 have thus highly benefited the Thai situation, while the Vietnamese-Chinese relationship up to 1991 was frosty or worse. The transnational aspects of *huaqiao* activities also have a darker side, with a plethora of criminal syndicates and drug trafficking operations that have sometimes gained the tacit support of Southeast Asian politicians and military leaders. A final chapter discusses the permanence and continuity of Chinese-ness. The author asserts that a subtle re-sinification has been discernible in Thailand since the 1970s, and that something similar is also occurring in Vietnam in the *doi-moi* era. This development is supported by the 'opening up' of China since 1978 and by the influence of media products (not least TV series). According to Leveau, interestingly, this re-sinification is not incompatible with strong involvement in Thai nationalism among the Chinese minority.

The book is clear and comprehensible in style and contains several useful tables with statistical and historical data. The rather forward account could at times have benefited from a more explicit theoretical discussion of key concepts. There is, I believe, more to be said about the definition and application of ethnicity in general terms. The bibliography contains 197 books and articles, but all, without exception, deal with the particular China-Southeast Asia field. Another point on the negative side is that the text is careless with

details. Deng Xiaoping, for instance, is called 'l'ancien président chinois' whereas he was actually no more than vice-premier, and emperor Yong Le is occasionally referred to as Yong as if this was a surname. There are also problems with the author's account of the 1978-1979 events in Vietnam. To sum up, Leveau's book is hardly groundbreaking and sometimes lacks in explanatory power. Nevertheless it is a useful reference that summarizes the very different historical experience of two *huaqiao* groups.

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A.W.H. Massier, *Van recht naar hukum; Indonesische juristen en hun taal, 1915-2000*. (Privately published), 2003, xiii + 234 pp. [PhD thesis, Leiden University.] ISBN 90.9017236.X (paperback).

HAN BING SIONG

This book deals with the transition from 'recht' (the Dutch word for law) to 'hukum' (the corresponding Indonesian word), describing the Indonesian jurists and their language from 1915 up to 2000. It is a remarkable thesis in that its author as a graduate in Indonesian languages and culture rather than in law, presents a very interesting historical overview of an important aspect of what Rudolf Stammler (as Lemaire and Djokosoetono taught their students) called the reality of law. The amount of literature in the field of law which the author studied for the purpose of writing this book is amazing indeed. Having myself opposed the common claim that many inadequately trained judges were appointed during the Japanese occupation, I was really surprised to see my view corroborated by Massier's in-depth research (p. 123-4). Regrettably when reproducing the conventional claim, he omits to refute it explicitly with reference to his own important findings. Apart from the chapters on the significance of language, in many respects this book has the appearance of a thesis for obtaining the degree of *doctor juris*. And in a development which few had expected, least of all the candidate himself, he was indeed awarded that degree.

The history described in this book starts with the first Indonesians graduating from the Rechtsschool (Law school), established by the Dutch in 1909 for the purpose of turning out Indonesian personnel sufficiently trained in law to man the *landraden*, the courts to which the Indonesian people was subject. As the course was supposed to take six years, the first graduations should in principle have taken place, as the book's subtitle suggests, in 1915. As the reader can learn from several of the very extensive and informative footnotes, however, some Indonesians actually graduated from the school as early as 1912. According to my own sources, the total number of people who gradu-

ated between 1912 and 1914 was ten. This was possible because candidates whose performance in the entrance examination showed that they had already achieved a high enough level were allowed to skip the first half of the course and begin immediately with the fourth year.

It is interesting to read how the course was organized. The students were thoroughly educated in law and the Dutch language, and also had to learn to know the Dutch way of life and the Dutch mind. Very strikingly they were also trained to be independent and critical, which contradicts the allegation by some authors that the *landraden* had no institutional autonomy or freedom to disagree with the actions of the state. Several verified cases are known in which Indonesian judges, even during the Japanese occupation, had the courage to resist efforts to influence them.

Massier treats language as a form of human conduct rather than as a tool or instrument for the legal profession. Accordingly, in his historical overview he describes how Indonesian jurists continued to think, argue, and write in Dutch, and to work in ways guided by their legal knowledge in that language, long after Indonesian became the official language of their profession in 1942. On the other hand his stories along these lines, however agreeable, generally lack factual substantiation. On page 136, for example, Massier states that for the Indonesian jurists the Indonesian text of the 1945 constitution actually had Dutch legal texts and words as background. When writing, reading and interpreting the constitution, he argues, it was not only the words of Soekarno and other nationalists that were significant, but also lectures in Dutch on constitutional law, the books of Kranenburg, and the Dutch works on *adat* law by Van Vollenhoven and Ter Haar. This claim, however, is not actually proven here, and seems to be based on assumptions rather than facts.

In the Indonesian literature on law, however, there are some manifest examples of how the Indonesian jurists did remain under the influence of what they had learned in Dutch. Here it comes to light that Massier is a true graduate in Indonesian language and cultures rather than in law. Firstly, in Dutch the term *recht* has two different meanings. The first, called the objective meaning, refers to laws and regulations. The second, called the subjective meaning, refers to rights. In the Indonesian language as in English, however, no word exists which comprises both meanings. As in English these are covered by two separate terms: *hukum* for law, and *hak* for right. In several Indonesian publications, however, the authors (including Kabul Arifin, Kartanegara, Soejono Hadinoto, Tirtaamidjaja, Tresna, and Utrecht) surprisingly do state that the term *hukum* has two meanings, an objective and a subjective one. Here these authors, still influenced by what they once learned in Dutch, are actually expounding the Dutch term *recht*, not realizing that *hukum* is not equivalent to *recht*, of which it can only have the objective and never the subjective meaning.

Another example is Moeljatno, whom Massier specifically mentions on

page 148 for his effort to give the sentences in his Indonesian translation of the Dutch criminal code an Indonesian structure so as to make them understandable for those jurists with no command of the Dutch language. What impressed me more when reviewing Moeljatno's book in 1961 was his effort to find the most appropriate Indonesian terms on the basis of what he had learned from the Dutch criminal law doctrine. Where there were different opinions in the doctrine, Moeljatno, quite understandably, selected only one for his translation, leaving out others. And sometimes he even departed from the text of the Dutch criminal code, for instance when he introduced the term *perbuatan pidana*. According to Massier, Moeljatno claimed that *perbuatan pidana* was a new Indonesian notion and certainly not a translation of the Dutch term *strafbaar feit* (punishable offence). Indeed it was not, but the point is that Moeljatno, although refusing to speak Dutch, was in effect still controlled by his academic knowledge in that language. Obviously following the views of the Dutch professor Van Hattum, Moeljatno rejected altogether the notion of *strafbaar feit* because it was considered to be elliptical, not expressing the necessary connection with its perpetrator. By contrast that link is evident in the Indonesian word *perbuatan*, which clearly refers to someone who *berbuat*. As a member of Massier's examination committee I could not resist the temptation to check to what extent this candidate really was a self-made jurist. I asked him whether the term *perbuatan pidana* was correct or not from a general viewpoint of the criminal law. In my opinion the answer is negative: Moeljatno's term is inadequate because the criminal law not only penalizes acts, but also omissions, *tidak berbuat*.

Particularly gripping is the story of how the Dutch language gradually lost its predominant influence. The various factors leading to its decline are very meticulously described in this book. Although Massier (p. 152) refrains from putting it in quite this way, one factor was that the Dutch did not offer the Indonesians sufficient opportunity to prepare themselves properly for independence by educating many more Indonesian legal specialists to become professors and lecturers in law. To me the most crucial factor seems to be that the Dutch language was no longer taught in the elementary and secondary schools. The inevitable effect, as described by Massier (pp. 145-6), was that the new generations of Indonesian jurists increasingly had no command of the Dutch language and so less and less access to the many Dutch laws maintained in force through various Japanese and Indonesian transitional stipulations. To me it seems that Massier's historical overview will not immediately make clear to its reader exactly when the Indonesian government removed the Dutch language from the teaching packet. A law is mentioned (p. 145), issued in 1950 in Yogyakarta by the Republik Indonesia (at the time one of the states of the Republik Indonesia Serikat, or Republic of the United States of Indonesia), making the Indonesian language the official language in the schools. For the remainder of the Indonesian territory this law was put into force only in 1954.

On page 155, however, Massier states that the students who completed their secondary school education on republican territory in the 1940s already had no education in the Dutch language. So the change must have been before 1950, but when? Personally I assume that the Republik Indonesia just continued with the school system which existed under the Japanese (minus the teaching of Japanese), in which Dutch was no longer a teaching subject. Probably the law of 1950 was issued for the so called *daerah pulihan* (recovered areas) – areas which initially were under Dutch control and where Dutch was therefore still taught in the schools, but which after March 1950 joined the Republik Indonesia. As the territory controlled by the republic had been quickly and drastically reduced by the two Dutch military actions, the area where the pupils had no education in Dutch was comparatively small, and so the number of students who finished their schooling there in the second half of the forties must have been rather limited as well. This is the reason why, compared with Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, the University of Indonesia in Jakarta, the law faculty in Makassar and even Airlangga University in Surabaya (although actually controlled by Gadjah Mada University) had many more students who still understood Dutch. Consequently it would in principle still have been possible in the early 1950s, after the Dutch had recognized Indonesian sovereignty, to make the transition from a Dutch educational system to an Indonesian one more gradual. It would also still have been feasible to introduce Dutch as a compulsory subject in secondary schools for those intending to study law. Unfortunately, however, this did not happen, according to Massier (p. 145) because the Dutch language was a politically touchy matter. Here again elucidation is needed as to the reason why it was a politically touchy matter. Was it perhaps because Dutch-Indonesian relations had become turbid due to the Dutch refusal to recognize Irian Barat as Indonesian territory? Or was it in view of the anti-Dutch language policy pursued by the Republik Indonesia in Yogyakarta during the revolution, which was in fact the continuation of a Japanese occupation policy? If so, then what we are looking at here is another part of the Japanese legacy, to set alongside the creditable Japanese measures Massier mentions on page 124 (the Japanese also laid the foundation for the Polisi Negara or National Police). Nevertheless, as Massier's book makes clear, the Japanese are hardly to blame for the fact that at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Indonesian jurists still lack a homogeneous and unambiguous legal terminology and language of their own.

In view of its significance, it is great to hear that the KITLV Press will be publishing an English translation of this most informative thesis.

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Andrew Berry (ed.), *Infinite tropics; An Alfred Russel Wallace anthology*, with a preface by Stephen Jay Gould. London: Verso, 2002, xviii + 430 pp. ISBN 1.85894.6521, price: GBP 19.00 (hardback); 1.85984.4782, GBP 14.00 (paperback).

DAVID HICKS

Concluding with a 'Coda: Wallace and Darwin', this collection contains just over forty extracts from the writings of the great naturalist. These the editor has assorted under the rubrics 'A biographical sketch', 'Science', 'Humans', 'Spiritualism and metaphysics', 'Travel', and 'Social issues', each of which he introduces with commentaries that usefully guide the reader to the self-revelations that follow. Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913) was one of the most publicly celebrated scientists the nineteenth century produced, and the encyclopedic diversity of topics disclosed in these extracts gives some indication why. Although best known, of course, for discovering natural selection, Wallace had at least one other major discovery to his credit: he had first claim to the title 'founder of biogeography' (although in all likelihood his modesty would have prevented him from staking it). He made his mark with the British public as a prolific writer on many of the important social matters of the day, as well as publishing well-written narratives (such as *Narratives of travel on the Amazon and Rio Negro*) which described his travels in South America (1848-1852) and in other exotic parts of the world. These and his articles attest to his standing as an indefatigable traveller. He also lectured in North America in 1886 and 1887. But as the title of the aforementioned coda intimates, he is most usually regarded in counterpoint to the more renowned Charles Darwin. Retrospectively remarking the respective liens he and Darwin had on the discovery of natural selection, his generous concession to the latter directs us immediately to his self-effacing honesty: 'what is often forgotten by the Press and by the public is, that the idea occurred to Darwin in 1838, nearly twenty years earlier than to myself' (p. 66).

The 'central and controlling incident' (p. 112) of Wallace's life, according to his own estimation, was the period of eight years from 1854 to 1862 which he spent travelling in Southeast Asia, and during the course of which he discovered what Thomas Huxley was later to dub the 'Wallace Line' separating Asian from Australasian animal species. Announcing this discovery in an 1860 paper, he averred that the western and eastern islands of the Malay Archipelago 'belong to regions more distinct and contrasted than any other of the great zoological divisions of the globe' (p. 115). A detailed account of the expedition that made it possible for him to reach this conclusion and contribute so definitively to the field of biogeography appeared nine years later in his two-volume work, *The Malay Archipelago*. Characteristically, he dedi-

cated the work to Charles Darwin. Less well known, perhaps, is his interest in spiritualism – he attended his first séance in 1865 and began writing about the topic within a year – and his dedication to socialism.

For anyone wanting to know something about the life and writings of one of the great original thinkers of the nineteenth century, Mr. Berry has provided a stimulating introduction, the usefulness of which is enhanced by a bibliography of Alfred Russel Wallace's principal works and a compilation of works about him. This physically handsome volume's sole shortcoming is its banal preface.

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J. van Goor, *Indische avonturen; Opmerkelijke ontmoetingen met een andere wereld*. Den Haag: Sdu Uitgevers, 2000, 294 pp. ISBN 90.12.08854.2. Price: EUR 18.50 (paperback).

CAROL KERSTEN

This essay collection highlights an aspect of the East-West encounter that is more frequently found in literary writings than in historiography: the personal encounter between Westerner and Asian. The book's samples are preceded by a contemplation of the formal status of the early Dutch presence in Asia, focusing on the contradictory image of a European trading company behaving like a sovereign power. To its Dutch board the VOC was indeed a business corporation, but its expatriate officialdom exploited the wide-ranging authorities given by its charter to the fullest. Van Goor presents the VOC as a 'hybrid state' whose theatre of operations was eventually turned into the Dutch East Indies.

This provides the historical backdrop for the *dramatis personae*, whose exploits are illustrative of the gradual and many-faceted process of colonial state formation in Asia. Van Goor notes that the Asian perspective on this development is often forgotten, while it can actually contribute significantly to dispel the myth that – after 1800 – colonialism suddenly turned into imperialism. Regrettably he leaves it at that hint, because the remarkable encounters he presents are mainly drawn from European sources, which – particularly before the nineteenth century -- tended to focus mainly on the role of the colonizers.

The interaction between Asian courts and European merchants is presented on the basis of the in itself very interesting episode of the Greek-born adventurer Phaulkon in seventeenth-century Siam. Unfortunately this story has already been milked by scholars from almost every conceivable angle, so that little that is new is added here. More interesting is the exploration of the attitudes of European Christians towards the bewildering variety of religious practices



in Asia, illustrated by accounts of the behavior of two Dutch clergymen on the Coromandel Coast and Ceylon respectively. Recruiting tens of thousands of Europeans for overseas service during its two-hundred year history, the VOC was constantly confronted with desertions, many of them difficult to distinguish from merely 'going AWOL'. The experiences of fifteen soldiers based at Fort Rotterdam in Makassar serve as an example of this ambiguity.

'The accountant and the sultan' relates the sorry tale of Nicolaas Kloek, the first VOC envoy to Pontianak. Portrayed as a somewhat deranged predecessor of Multatuli, Kloek's stint on Borneo ended prematurely in a bizarre stand-off with the sultanate's founder, Sayyid Joesoef (Yusuf), in 1778. Another Dutch venture into Borneo, more than a century later, was the expedition of the physician-ethnographer Nieuwenhuis across the heart of the island in 1896-1897. Mainly based on the explorer's own book, *In centraal Borneo*, the picture that emerges is that a lot remained hidden even for this most empathetic of observers. A case could be made that although the expedition was initiated and officially led by Nieuwenhuis, it was in fact the accompanying Dayak chiefs who ensured the success of the enterprise. These 'lords of the interior' showed themselves to be not only efficient organizers, but also skilful manipulators who used the event of the expedition to accomplish some of their own political goals.

A similar impression is created by the Arab trader Said Abdoellah Jelani's involvement in Balinese and Lombok politics in the 1890s, on the eve of the Dutch annexation of the two islands. In the end Said Abdoellah's fate was no different from that of Phaulkon when his juggling act of intrigue and manipulation, in which he tried to play Balinese royalty, Sasaks, Dutch, and other outsiders against each other, finally unravelled. Van Goor notes that Said Abdoellah was a native of Mosul in Iraq, and not from the Hadramaut in present-day Yemen, from which the great majority of the sizeable Arab communities in Southeast Asia hailed. Considering his birthplace it is quite likely that he was not of Arab origin at all, but perhaps of Kurdish descent. In view of the research by Martin van Bruinessen into Kurdish influences on Indonesian Islam, this possibility is not as far-fetched as it may seem.

*Indische avonturen* concludes with a bird's eye view of visitors to the Dutch East Indies in the first half of the twentieth century. Improved communications drew a wide variety of travellers to the colony, among them a diplomat and a journalist critical of the Dutch 'ethical policy'; a linguist with a romantic penchant for traditional Javanese music; a cycling painter; and an increasing number of women. To all this van Goor has added a brief epilogue in which he concludes that despite all stereotypes, it was most often the personal qualities of the travellers in question which determined the character of the East-West encounter.

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Robert Martin Dumas, *'Teater Abdulmuluk' in Zuid-Sumatra; Op de drempel van een nieuw tijdperk*. Leiden: Onderzoekschool CNWS, School voor Aziatische, Afrikaanse en Amerindische Studies, 2000, 345 pp. ISBN 90.5789.041.0. Price: EUR 31.76 (paperback).

LISA MIGO

This book, the result of many years of original research, forms the first full-length study of Abdulmuluk theatre, a subject which has long occupied the author. The Abdulmuluk style of theatre exists in Palembang, south Sumatra. It is a highly specialized type of theatre which would traditionally perform dramatized fragments of the 'Syair Abdul Muluk', one of the most famous Malay poems, dating back to the nineteenth century. Today, however, the artists have evolved into semi-professional companies. As always, both the small company and its audience are comprised of the lower social classes: this is the inclusive theatre of the 'common man'.

For the purposes of this study, Dumas travelled to Palembang in 1990 and again in 1996. During his stay his fieldwork data was gathered from the perspective of both participant and observer, an interesting duality, which gave him a unique insight into the workings of these companies and their reinterpretations of the genre. His experiences dealing with a small number of companies are used as case studies in this work, proving that though Abdulmuluk groups exist across the region, each company will have its own characteristics and identity. It is a dynamic and creative art form, altering its style according to the demands of changing audience tastes and the conditions in which the company performs. One notable change occurred during the Second World War when the occupying Japanese influence caused the introduction of a platform on which the company could perform. Previously, performances had occurred on flat ground. Many similar changes have altered the form and content of the Abdulmuluk theatre over the years. More recently, women have been included among the companies, reflecting the changing Indonesian society.

As this is a largely unresearched subject, it requires a great deal of contextualization, which can be overwhelming to the general reader. The author has certainly researched the historical and sociological developments carefully, providing a comprehensive theatrical history using a wide variety of sources. However, given the amount of detail provided and number of languages used, the absence of an index and a glossary is surprising. Early chapters gave much useful and necessary background information, tracing the history of the Abdulmuluk theatre within the more familiar context of Asian forms of theatre (Chinese, Malay and Javanese) that exist in parallel within multi-cultural Indonesia. Once this wider framework has been sketched, later chapters deal with the origins of Abdulmuluk theatre and its characteristics in more detail.

Here the most striking aspect of Abdulmuluk theatre, its flexibility in terms of form and content, can be seen. It is an art form that has always changed with the times, adapting to local conditions in order to maintain its appeal. More importantly, as traditions are being lost elsewhere, conscious attempts are being made to ensure that this specialized regional knowledge is passed on to future generations so that it can continue to be enjoyed.

Dumas has given the reader a coherent historical and theoretical framework and told the story of the Abdulmuluk well. It is an impressive study focusing on the details of a small world, one that has been overlooked by researchers. He ends with a plea for further work to be done in this area, especially on the older forms of theatre that exist alongside the Abdulmuluk. I can only echo this request, knowing that others are researching the Komedi Stamboel and Bangsawan. It will be interesting to see a comparative critical context develop.

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Claude Guillot, Marie-France Dupoizat, Daniel Perret, Untung Sunaryo and Heddy Surachman (eds), *Histoire de Barus, Sumatra; Le site de Lobu Tua; II; Étude archéologique et documents*. Paris: Association Archipel, 2003, 339 pp. [Cahier d'Archipel 30.] ISBN 2.910513.408.

JONH N. MIKSIC

A thousand years ago, the port of Barus on the northwest coast of Sumatra was an important destination for merchants from Armenia, Old Cairo, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and several coasts of South Asia. Barus exerted a powerful attraction on traders from all corners of the Eurasian trade network for five centuries. Despite the wealth and reknown which this port generated, few traces of its past are visible today. The site is difficult to reach by modern transport. Archaeological research here required stamina and willpower. The team led by C. Guillot conducted six campaigns here between 1995 and 2000. For its exceptional exertions, and for the timely publication of two volumes of reports, M. Guillot and his colleagues are owed a major debt of gratitude by the scholarly community.

The first volume, published in 1998, provided a preliminary report on the first three seasons of research, and studies of Indian, Armenian, and Chinese historical sources. Two more volumes were planned. The second volume to appear, the work reviewed here, seems meant to complete the publication programme since it provides both a detailed archaeological report and an illustrated catalogue of artefacts.

Nine authors (four French, five Indonesian) contributed fourteen chapters to the second volume which deal with archaeological excavations; historical conclusions; Indian ceramics; Chinese ceramics; Near Eastern ceramics; fine-paste *kendi*; 'local' ceramics; glass; beads; gold coins; stone; brick; and the Muslim epigraphy of Barus. The text is accompanied by copious illustrations of artefacts. The Avant-propos accurately comments that the rarity of this type of publication in the historical archaeology of Southeast Asia is a major obstacle to meaningful comparative or synthetic studies.

Archaeological remains are found at several separate loci in the Barus area. The 1995-2000 campaigns were conducted at a site known as Lubok Tua in older publications, but Lobu Tua in this and other recent publications. Lubok Tua, which means 'Old Slough' (an area of deep water at a bend in a stream), is the traditional appellation. The site includes an area of about 7.5 hectares circumscribed by earthen ramparts and a trench, within which over 1,000 square metres were excavated during the course of this research. Smaller excavations outside the ramparts also yielded habitation remains covering an area of perhaps 200 hectares.

The site was occupied for approximately 250 years, from the mid-ninth century to the end of the twelfth. The ancient habitation stratum is 60 cm thick, a decent accumulation by local standards, but it has been badly disturbed by looting which began in the mid-1800s, apparently stimulated by discoveries of gold objects. On a slight rise of ground, a fragment of a stone inscribed in Old Javanese was said to have been found in the nineteenth century. Archaeological work of the 1990s identified remnants of a simple brick structure of approximately 5 square metres there.

Apart from this potential centre of ceremonial activity, no activity areas or ethnic zones were identified at the site, although the enceinte was apparently subdivided into two sectors by an internal rampart and ditch. One of these sectors was apparently settled earlier and more densely than the other, according to the archaeological assemblages.

Artefacts from a variety of foreign sources provide abundant evidence for trading links. Some of the imported items are characterized as belonging to the sphere of domestic use rather than commerce. Artefacts of South Asian origin include pottery, a 'Roman' oil lamp, a foot of a bronze lamp, and fragments of red and black sculpted granite, a stone which is not known to exist in Sumatra. Few pieces of worked stone were found in the site.

The most important connection between Barus and South Asia may have been Sri Lanka. Other connections with Kerala and possibly Gujerat are postulated on the basis of pottery forms, some of which are judged to be intermediate between South Asian and Near Eastern forms (pp. 57-8). Barus was in contact with Siraf, in the Persian Gulf, and some glass objects probably from the Mediterranean appear to date from the late eleventh century, when the



Photo 5. Terraced mound Karaeng Loe Burane at Kalimporo  
viewed from the southwest

main commercial route shifted from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea. Barus coins have been found in Fostat, where a twelfth-century document has been found stating that a Fostat merchant died in Barus.

In addition to glass, archaeologists discovered approximately 1,000 shards of Near Eastern pottery at Barus. These ceramics are characterized as functional rather than decorative; no exceptional pieces such as lustre ware were found. Slightly over 1,000 glass beads were found. All were made from drawn glass, and therefore mainly of South Asian provenance.

More than 9,000 shards of glass found at Lubok Tua are typical Near Eastern artefacts of this period. The authors of this book argue that most glass objects at Barus were for daily use (p. 225). However, glass objects were rare in Southeast Asia at this period, and it is more likely that they were prestigious items. The author here may have been led to characterize the glass as mundane by his opinion that Barus had a resident Near Eastern community who used glass in daily life. This inference is supported by the observation that apparently no pieces of glass have been reported from the interior of Sumatra except for an example at Si Pamutung, Padang Lawas. This situation contrasts with fourteenth-century Singapore and Riau, where glass was common in the hinterland. The difference may be due to the differential reasons for importation of glass (for domestic purposes as opposed to trade, as Guillot argues), possibly connected with differences between time periods, but on the other hand it may be connected with the lack of intensive archaeological work in the Sumatran interior.

Over 17,000 shards of Chinese wares from Jiangxi, Guangdong, Zhejiang, and the Yueh kilns of southeastern China were excavated. The estimated duration of occupation at Barus is based on the analysis of Chinese ceramics, although Barus ceased to import Chinese ceramics in the early twelfth century. Neither Changsha three-colour ware nor southern Song Fujian wares are found (although four Ming shards were recovered). Guangdong sherds are the most numerous; just as at other sites of this period in Southeast Asia. Other items of probable Chinese origin include 211 forged nails. Many iron blades of many forms were recovered, but it is not known whether these include any imports.

Another probable import consists of sherds of a particular type of earthenware used mainly to make pouring vessels known in Southeast Asia as *kendi*. This type of earthenware is said to be common at Lubok Tua, but no statistics are provided. Similar artefacts are known from many sites of the tenth through fourteenth centuries, from Java to mainland Southeast Asia to the Philippines. They are distinctive in the repertoire of ancient Southeast Asian pottery due to their symmetry, their elaborate shapes, and the probable use of the potter's wheel. It has been suggested that they were imported from outside the region, but the fact that they are found in large quantities

throughout Southeast Asia and unknown elsewhere makes this improbable. Laboratory analysis has established that fourteenth-century Singapore probably imported such artefacts from southern Thailand. The conclusion in this volume that the Barus examples were made somewhere along the shores of the Bay of Bengal, probably in the south of Thailand, is in line with my own research and could be confirmed by further laboratory tests similar to those already conducted in Singapore.

Barus was a centre of metal-working. Slag identified as the by-product of iron-working was discovered by the archaeologists. The excavators recovered stone moulds for making jewellery, and describe clay molds for coins or coin-like objects, apparently found by a local resident. Three gold coins found in the excavations consist of two sizes, both decorated with the 'sandalwood flower' motif typical of coins recovered by local residents at Barus since the mid-nineteenth century.

These discoveries provide significant support for the conclusion that Barus probably produced gold jewellery and coins. The sandalwood motif was also used in Java for silver coins. The significance of this Barus-Java link is unclear. Nevertheless, it seems likely that the production of coins and jewellery was conducted at local initiative. The designs of the jewellery and coins are typical of ancient Indonesia, and owe nothing to external influences. In fact Barus coinage may have influenced the development of the Javanese monetary system. Java has no sources of silver; while both silver and gold are abundant in the mountains of Sumatra, the Barus area does not yield these metals. The implication is that Barus functioned much like other early entrepôts: it imported raw materials from several areas, processed them, and profited greatly by supplying them to the maritime commercial network. As the first volume in this report shows, Barus owed much to its location near the source of valuable camphor trees.

The major local product represented in the excavations, as one might expect, is pottery. Much of what is categorized as 'local' ceramics is low-fired and poorly preserved. These ceramics consist of cooking pots, bowls, jars, and lids. Their forms are identical to those found in sites along the Straits of Melaka, Riau, and western Borneo.

It is in the realm of earthenware pottery that inferences drawn in this report are likely to occasion disagreement. One relatively minor matter concerns the interpretation of differences in the constituents of the pottery. The local earthenware can be separated into two types, one of which seems to have contained some form of organic temper which has disappeared, leaving a more porous texture than the other type. 'If, under the same physical conditions, one series has seen its temper disappear while in the other it has been preserved', according to this report, 'one cannot but assign the difference to the chemical nature of the temper and thus to a different origin of the paste'

(p. 209). In fact potters often import pottery temper from various sources. There may have been two communities of potters in Barus using different sources of temper; one may have been drawn from the hinterland population (the 'Batak'), the other maybe from the coastal populations (the 'Malay'). The difference may also be chronological.

The more important debatable inference regarding earthenware consists of the contention that much of it was imported from India. Much pottery from the east coast of Sumatra displays marked carinations. Guillot considers this trait to be Indian. In Chapter Three, 'Indian ceramics', 600 kg of pottery are analysed. This pottery resembles that of South India and Sri Lanka, but 'the precise origin of this pottery remains difficult to establish'. The Barus examples differ from those of South Asia in that earthenware found in Barus is less homogenous, lower-fired, and thus quite friable. A common decorative motif in Barus is a sawtooth incised design which is not found in South Asia. Neither is it common elsewhere in the Sumatran sites yet examined, although a few samples have been found in northeast Sumatra and Singapore.

It is true that some of the earthenware pottery found at Barus was probably imported. An oil lamp illustrated on page 90 is different from any known example in Southeast Asia, but similar to items from Polonnoruva. Kadhai, vessels resembling cooking pots but with a grid pattern all over the base, are said to be very common at Barus (illustrations on pages 94, 96). They look very different from anything else in Southeast Asia. In these examples, a good case can be made for importation.

In other examples, however, the argumentation is not as convincing. For instance on page 99 it is concluded that a cord-marked large jar, of coarse paste, is not an import because of its coarseness. The volume frequently exhibits a presumption that all Barus-made pottery must have been primitive. The reverse supposition should be made: all artefacts should be assumed to be local unless importation can be demonstrated. While it is true, as Guillot argues, that most earthenware used in the Barus area today is imported from neighbouring areas of Sumatra, this cannot be used to argue for a similar situation 1,000 years ago. Pottery has been found in the North Sumatran hinterland as well as in coastal areas. The lack of data on early Batak pottery must be assumed to be the result of lack of research rather than lack of the ability to produce ceramics.

A related controversy derives from the author's inference that foreign merchants resided in Barus. This assertion appeared in the first volume of this report and reappears in Volume Two. The perceived 'multiculturalism' of the archaeological assemblage is used to argue that the population of the site was of diverse origins. This is a major leap of logic. Of course one cannot attain one hundred percent certainty in archaeology; we must speak in terms of probabilities and degrees of certainty. Historical analogy shows that



ports of trade certainly have existed from Mesopotamia to ancient Europe to nineteenth-century China, as well as Indonesia, where enclaves were set aside for foreign residents. Can we detect such enclaves using archaeological data? The degree of certainty attainable on this point must be considered to be quite low in the current state of the discipline. No studies of archaeological sites have ever been made with the goal of developing a methodology for detecting the presence of foreign quarters. Even if someone were to perform an ethnohistorical study of a recent site, it would be difficult to establish a method for projecting this pattern into the distant past.

Because of the 'inferior' quality of some 'Indianized' pottery, Guillot is willing to consider that it was made locally. He does not discuss the identity of the potters in such a case. In most early cultures, as in many modern Southeast Asian societies, pottery was made by women. Guillot writes that there is little evidence for the presence of women in Barus, and the one example he cites, that of jewellery, is not valid because both men and women wore ornaments in ancient Southeast Asia. The deficiency of women would bolster Guillot's case in one respect, since most international merchants were men, but if such were the case, the community would not have lasted long. If the merchants married local women, on the other hand, then one would expect the boundary between local and foreign communities to become indistinct. This is one of many complications which would have to be thought out if an archaeological test for the existence of a foreign enclave were to be devised.

Guillot acknowledges that Barus could not have become a foreign comptoir without active participation by the local population. He is not, however, willing to grant Sumatrans credit for creating the port. He frequently stresses the 'primitive' character of local society. He does not however attempt to relate Barus to the Padang Lawas site. Padang Lawas in the North Sumatran hinterland is contemporary with at least the eleventh- and twelfth-century phase of Lubok Tua. But who then built Padang Lawas, if not Bataks? Why were there so many temples at Padang Lawas, against only one at Barus? Song ceramics have been found there too. Padang Lawas's location at the lowest point in the Sumatran mountain chain strongly implies that it lay on a trans-island trade route. It would be very useful to compare the finds at Barus with those from Jambi and Palembang on Sumatra's east coast to understand the relations between these three contemporary ports. Barus coin has been found at Candi Gumpung, Muara Jambi (p. 56).

It is also necessary to note that it would be very difficult to make a rigid distinction between sites which foreign merchants only visited for brief periods, and those where a permanent foreign community was formed. There is a clinal transition between these two conditions, not a categorical difference. Many alternative patterns exist. For instance, A.R. Wallace described in his book *The Malay Archipelago* a practice whereby a deserted beach in

Dobo, eastern Indonesia, became for a few weeks each year a meeting place of foreign merchants and local resource procurers. A veritable village was established during a certain season, only to be completely abandoned for the rest of the year. Such a case bears strong resemblance to medieval European trade fairs.

The argument that Barus was a medieval port with foreign quarters constitutes a large part of the programme of this volume. 'In short, everything leads to the conclusion that there reigned in the city an Indian atmosphere and that Barus presented itself primarily as an Indian comptoir in Sumatra' (p. 44). Indians are described as the most populous foreign community in Barus. It is also asserted that Sumatran gold mines were worked by Indians (p. 45), despite the lack of any artefactual data. Based on relative quantities of artefacts, it is concluded that there were Arab inhabitants in Barus, but that they were not as numerous as 'Indians'. The lack of an obvious Islamic character at Barus is noted, including the lack of any Islamic tombs earlier than the fourteenth century, but a seal with the names Allah and Muhammad is used to infer the existence of a Muslim community. The seal is undated, and there is no indication that it was imported by Muslims, so its value as evidence is negligible. The assertion (p. 172) that the importation of Near Eastern storage jars as well as better-quality Chinese storage vessels indicates the presence of an Arab community in Barus is not convincing either.

This book concludes that the Javanese formed the most numerous community of Indonesian inhabitants at Barus. There is apparently no evidence for this other than an Old Javanese inscription which has not been translated. The large quantity of Chinese porcelain, in contrast, is discounted as evidence for a Chinese community because there is no sign that a 'Chinese way of life' was led at Barus (p. 62). One can retort that corresponding evidence for an Indian or Muslim 'way of life' is also absent. The use of chalk mortar in the construction of a ruined brick building (p. 301) is certainly evidence of familiarity with an Indian mode of building, but a single structure is not sufficient to demonstrate the existence of a 'way of life'.

The remains found at Barus correspond well to what might have been predicted on the basis of historical documentation. This suggests that Lubok Tua can be viewed as an accurate depiction of the Southeast Asian end of the trading network which spanned the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea in the first millennium AD. This volume is an important contribution to the field of Southeast Asian historical archaeology. One need not agree with all interpretations offered in it to conclude that the data, rapidity of publication, and format of presentation provide an admirable model which other archaeologists working in the region would do well to emulate.

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Traude Gavin, *Iban ritual textiles*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2003, xi + 356 pp. [Verhandelingen 205.] ISBN 90.6718.202.8. Price: EUR 40.00 (paperback).

SANDRA NIESSEN

Traude Gavin's *Iban ritual textiles* is the result of numerous short periods of anthropological fieldwork in Sarawak between 1986 and 1999, totaling almost three years. Gavin's findings have appeared previously in more abbreviated form in *The women's warpath; Iban ritual fabrics from Borneo* (1996), the museum catalogue accompanying her exhibition in the Fowler Museum of Cultural History (California). Both are based on her PhD dissertation, *Iban ritual fabrics; Their patterns and names* (University of Hull, 1995).

Iban textiles are known to Indonesian textile scholars particularly from the classic *Iban or Sea Dayak fabrics and their patterns; A descriptive catalogue of the Iban fabrics in the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge*, published in 1936 by Alfred Haddon and Laura Start (and republished in 1982 by Ruth Bean, Bedford, Carlton). Gavin quickly noted, on the grounds of her ethnographic findings focused particularly on the weaving traditions of the Saribas and the Baleh in Sarawak, that a set of premises informing Haddon's and Start's work falls short of accurately representing the Iban strategies of naming and describing their textiles. It is a credit to her detailed analysis that her volume clearly re-situates Haddon's and Start's study both theoretically and ethnographically; Gavin presents a radically different understanding of the meaning and naming of patterns in Iban fabrics.

She depicts a dynamic web of hundreds of patterns continually being added to by new invention and transformed by fission and fusion. Patterns acquire status and prestige when they are copied again and again through time, and become widely recognized, and used in particular ritual ways. Gavin likens weavers to links in chains of transmission, finding that she could obtain reliable information about each pattern only if she spoke with someone who was a member of its chain of transmission (p. 21). Hundreds of illustrations are included in this publication to teach the reader to see through the eyes of the weaver, as it were, how the apparently continuous patterning in the cloths breaks down into named components, and to trace the ways in which weavers have transformed the patterns.

Pattern names range from descriptive 'labels' that function as 'tags of identification' on textiles of lesser rank, to 'titles' that announce their prestige and ritual significance, but may have no intrinsic association with pattern. Nevertheless Gavin notes that the distinction between 'label' and 'title' is not always clear-cut, and that the analytical emphasis she gives to it, while 'very much an Iban concern', is her 'personal choice' (p. 83). Scholars of Indonesian

textiles may choose to judge the usefulness of this distinction to Indonesian textile scholarship more generally, by its applicability to design nomenclature used in other parts of the archipelago.

It may be that Gavin proposes too sharp a separation when distancing herself from Haddon's position, rooted in an evolutionary paradigm, that Iban (and other primitive) designs constitute a symbol system (p. 201). She stresses that patterning in *pua* cloths is, in fact, primarily decorative, and that the weavers are, in the first instance, technicians, a fact that she claims tends to be forgotten during searches for symbols and meaning. She creates a tension that to my mind remains unresolved, because she also explores how Iban cloth and its production is infused with power and symbolism. From the outset she emphasizes the indispensable role of cloth on all Iban ritual occasions, and how cloth accrues status through, or is made eligible for, ritual usage. Appropriately, she examines how women position themselves socially by producing this ritual good, and by participating in rituals such as when, in past times, they held up a high ranking *pua* cloth to receive a head brought back by head-hunters in a powerfully meaningful social moment.

This readable publication constitutes a strong contribution to the field of Indonesian textile studies.

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Jan Lechner, *Uit de verte; Een jeugd in Indië 1927-1946*. Met een nawoord van Gerard Termorshuizen. Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, 2004, 151 pp. [Boekerij 'Oost en West'.] ISBN 90.6718.238.9. Prijs: EUR 14,95 (paperback).

FRANK OKKER

De tweede helft van de jaren twintig van de vorige eeuw vormde een periode van grote politieke onrust in het voormalige Nederlands-Indië. Zo brak er eind 1926 in het westelijk gedeelte van Java een door de communistische partij van Indonesië (PKI) georganiseerde opstand uit, die een aantal bestuurs-ambtenaren en inheemse politiemensen het leven kostte. Ook op Sumatra kwam het tot een hevig oproer. De overheid pakte duizenden aanhangers van de PKI op. De meesten van hen werden veroordeeld tot gevangenisstraffen, enkelen kregen zelfs de doodstraf. De communistische partij werd verboden.

Twee jaar later richtte Soekarno met een aantal geestverwanten de Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) op, die streefde naar een onafhankelijke staat via een beleid van non-coöperatie met de Nederlandse overheid. Mede als een reactie hierop verenigden de beruchte journalist H.C. Zentgraaff en zijn mede-

standers zich vanaf 1929 in de uiterst conservatieve Vaderlandsche Club.

Als gevolg van de nationalistische uitbarstingen trokken de meeste Europeanen zich terug in hun eigen kring, maar er waren er ook die zich wel degelijk verdiepten in de toekomst van Nederlands-Indië. Tot hen behoorden de ouders en naaste familieleden van de in 1927 in Semarang geboren Jan Lechner die, onder de titel *Uit de verte*, zijn jeugdherinneringen tot 1946 publiceerde. De vader van Lechner, die aanvankelijk directeur bij het gevangeniswezen was en later 'burgerambtenaar' op het Departement van Oorlog, had zelf de ophanging van enkele Indonesische communisten moeten bijwonen en vertrouwde zijn zoon, tijdens hun gezamenlijk verblijf in een Japans gevangenkamp, toe dat 'erg beroerd' te hebben gevonden.

Zijn ouders spraken geregeld over de mogelijkheid van een onafhankelijk Indonesië, net als zijn tante Mun en oom Hans van Gorkom, een majoor in het Indische leger. De laatsten waren bevriend met leden van de Indonesische intelligentsia, die zij thuis ontvingen. Ook stonden zij zeer kritisch tegenover het overheidsbeleid in de kolonie. In 1944 liet Lechners tante zich ondubbelzinnig uit over de vijandelijke houding waarmee de Indonesiërs de Nederlanders bejegenden. 'Met beter beleid was het anders gegaan. We verdienen niet anders dan wat we nu krijgen.'

Lechner, die later hoogleraar Spaanse letterkunde in Leiden werd, heeft lang gewacht met het opschrijven van zijn jeugdherinneringen. Dat heeft echter ook voordelen. Zelf haalt hij in dit verband de Britse historicus John McManners aan, die eerst op zesentachtigjarige leeftijd zijn oorlogservaringen optekende. Hij schreef dat 'het verstrijken van de jaren aan het geheugen een grotere helderheid verschaft, te vergelijken met de kleuren in een tuin die dieper en levendiger worden als de schemer invalt'. Een voorwaarde is natuurlijk wel dat de schrijver over een uitstekend geheugen beschikt en dat is bij Lechner beslist het geval. Zoals Gerard Termorshuizen in zijn nawoord vaststelt, is het vooral de rijkdom aan zeer persoonlijke details die deze jeugdherinneringen hun waarde verlenen.

Een voorbeeld daarvan is de weergave van het ochtendritueel van zijn vader in hun huis te Lembang, waaruit diens liefde voor het land spreekt. 'Mijn vader stond altijd vroeg op, maakte een kop zwarte koffie, stak zijn eerste sigaret op en ging dan in een rieten stoel op het terras zitten. Wat hij niet wilde missen was de zonsopgang: hoe langzamerhand in het eerste ochtendlicht de omringende gebergten – wij keken onder andere uit op de Tangkoeban Prahoe – kleur begonnen te krijgen en van bijna zwarte klompen tot donker blauwgroene, zacht blauwpaarse en ten slotte groene bergen werden. Daarna was hij klaar voor de dag.'

Opmerkelijk is de mildheid waarmee hij terugkijkt op zijn kamptijd. Hoewel hij zelf zodanig werd afgeranseld dat hij in de barak vanwege de blauwe striemen op zijn rug tijdelijk als 'de zebra' bekend stond, voelde hij

geen haat tegenover de Japanners, wellicht 'doordat het ging om een vreemd volk'. Hij kon zelfs een zekere bewondering opbrengen voor het 'professionalisme' van de Japanse militairen, eerder 'een groep monteurs [die] op weg was naar een karwei dan dat het ging om soldaten [...]'. De meeste indruk maakt echter de karakterisering van zijn medekampbewoners, zoals zijn vader 'taai als een leren riem' en dit portret van de politieke essayist Jacques de Kadt: 'lange kaki short, meestal wit overhemd en wat ouderwetse, bruine, hoge schoenen en daarbovenuit stekende sokken, die vreemd aandeden in onze omgeving'.

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William D. Wilder, *Journeys of the soul; Anthropological studies of death, burial and reburial practices in Borneo*. Phillips ME: Borneo Research Council, 2003, xiv + 366 pp. [Borneo Research Council Monograph Series 7.] ISBN 1.92990.04.X. Price: USD 45.00 (hardback).

ANGELA PASHIA

*Journeys of the soul* focuses on the mortuary practices of indigenous Bornean ethnic groups. Each of the chapters is an independent paper written by a noted scholar, focusing on different aspects of mortuary rituals. They are neatly tied together in focus and approach, each providing an ample amount of ethnographic description to supplement its argument. In addition, a well-written introductory chapter ties together the significant themes present in each culture addressed and reviews noteworthy theories regarding the importance of and need for rituals to cope with death.

The book is divided into two parts, based on the ethnographic information available for the societies which each part covers. Part I includes those cultures for which there is ethnographic data for mortuary practices in their traditional states. The chapter on the Rungus is written in the ethnographic present of fieldwork performed in the early 1960s and includes a great deal of information on traditional soul-concepts and ritual practice. George and Laura Appeli analyse whether Van Gennep's three-phase model of rites of passage can be applied to Rungus mortuary practices, concluding that it falls short due to a lack of consideration of the complexity of the soul-concepts involved. Ida Nicolaisen deals with the connection between mortuary rituals and fertility among the Punan Bah. She argues that mortuary rites are not simply a symbol of separation, and that the final separation brought on by the complete cycle of rituals is necessary for biological reproduction, linking death and fertility. In this argument, she addresses the points at which earlier theories, including

Hertz's theory dealing with the parallel between the condition of the corpse, the fate of the soul and the position of the survivors, fail to account for the full complexity involved in such rituals. Clifford Sather also demonstrates the shortcomings of earlier theories, such as Hertz's, as Iban conceptions of death are more complex than previously realized. He argues that Hertz's theory relies on physical death being a distinct moment, though the soul may linger, whereas the line between life and death is far more hazy for the Iban.

Part II focuses on societies that no longer perform traditional mortuary rituals. In both cases discussed here, most members of the ethnic group had converted to Christianity, which brought a simplification of the previously complex conceptions of a person's souls, as well as a subsequent reduction in ritual complexity. Matthew Amster performs an ethnohistoric reconstruction of pre-Christian mortuary practices among the Kelabit and addresses the significance of gender distinctions. He repeatedly notes difficulty in collecting information, as many of those who remember the traditional practices ascribe them to the influence of Satan. In the past, women functioned in the ritual domains dealing with agriculture, fertility and birth, while men's ritual roles dealt with death, hunting and preparation of meat in a ritual context. Amster argues that these ritual distinctions are the reason the death of a woman in childbirth is referred to as a bad death, as it brings separated ritual domains together. Pamela Lindell also faces the task of reconstructing pre-Christian practices among the Bidayuh. Early accounts from European colonialists and scholars report that the Bidayuh used three different methods to dispose of a body, including abandonment, cremation and burial. These accounts, however, are generally superficial, with little or no contextual information. Lindell claims that abandonment is only used in the case of an infant that is less than eight days old, as it does not have a soul yet. Cremation, which is rare in Borneo, was practiced until significant portions of the population converted to Christianity. Lindell shows that the mortuary rituals involved fit with Van Gennep's three-phase model, though the phases are completed in a much shorter period than among other Bornean societies. However, Hertz's model is again inadequate in that although the ideas underlying the rituals fit, the actual practices do not, as there is no secondary treatment of the body.

This book provides a wealth of ethnographic description of mortuary practices and a discussion of the complexity of the soul-concepts of five Bornean societies. Beyond this, a major theme uniting the chapters is a focus on discussions of the strong points and shortcomings of influential anthropological theories, especially those of Hertz and Van Gennep. While these theories are helpful in understanding and comparing mortuary practices, the authors conclude that they generally fail to account for the complexity arising from beliefs in multiple souls with varying fates, as opposed to the Western conception of a single soul.

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Huub de Jonge and Nico Kaptein (eds), *Transcending borders; Arabs, politics, trade and Islam in Southeast Asia*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002, viii + 246 pp. [Proceedings 5.] ISBN 90.6718.184.6. Price: EUR 27.50 (paperback).

JONATHAN H. PING

Southeast Asia has been the meeting place of political, economic, social and cultural forces for thousands of years. The civilizations, states and 'indigenous' peoples of the region have always been ready to welcome and benefit from the arrival of outsiders. Whether this was done through trade, marriage, appropriation or emulation, the result has always been a creolized or hybridized version of what originally arrived. Many scholars have explored the specific influence of the Indian, Chinese and European peoples on Southeast Asia. This text, *Transcending borders*, discusses the 'Arabs' and their impact and continuing influences upon Southeast Asia.

The most important contribution of the text is the reinforcing of the contemporary belief that to study Southeast Asia through an analysis of states, through historical periods, or using a Eurocentric theoretical analysis, is limited if not redundant. The geography and economy of the region, its maritime transportation and the global trade route through it, have fostered a unique process of hybridization that must be understood as a fundamental characteristic. Whilst scholars are required to restrict the subject of their study, the historically employed approaches have not allowed for an inclusion of the hybridization process. This text accounts for the hybridization process within Southeast Asia and at the same time restricts its subject by examining the 'Arabs'. It is a context-based analysis, which follows the 'Arabs' through Southeast Asian history and in discovering their lives, discovers Southeast Asia itself.

As Ho writes on page 29: 'The creole communities created out of their rhizomic bonds were hybrids [...] they were stable, prestigious – even socially conservative – communities which recorded, memorialised, ritualised and reproduced the dualities inherent in them. In doing so, they also came to play multiple roles in mediating the circuits of exchange which brought together various separate cultures, powers and economies into vital interdependence over expansive spaces.' The text is what Ho describes. It is an edited text born from an eclectic conference which found a commonality in the study of the 'Arabs'. The ten authors present very different chapters which discuss a broad range of subjects, including 'Arabs' in Malaya before World War II, and in Singapore as horse traders; fear of colonial rulers in regard to 'Arabs'; and also biographical accounts of 'Arabs'.

Several of the chapters are lacking sufficient theoretical and/or analytical analysis of the valuable facts that they report. The bulk of the contributions,



however, reinforce the broad approach of the text and acknowledge that it is not about racially pure Arabs, but about expanding the story of how Southeast Asia continually incorporates new cultural, social, political and economic elements. Mandal's chapter, 'Forging a modern Arab identity in Java in the early twentieth century', presents detailed accounts of 'Arab' influence and behaviour in Indonesia which explain the process and validate the theoretical understanding.

I think this text is brilliant in its approach to and analysis of Southeast Asia. It makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the 'Arabs' and their place in Southeast Asian history. It provides new detailed accounts of people and events. *Transcending borders* makes a bold statement through its multi-disciplinary approach which allows for an analysis of Southeast Asia which is restricted enough to be useful and yet innovative in its context.

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William C. Clarke, *Remembering Papua New Guinea; An eccentric ethnography*. Canberra: Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, 2003, 178 pp. ISBN 1.7407.6034.4. Price: AUD 40.00 (paperback).

ANTON PLOEG

The Maring, the people about whom Clarke wrote his ethnography, live in the northern fringes of the central highlands of Papua New Guinea. Clarke went there initially to do his PhD research. He was member of a team that also included Roy A. Rappaport, who made the Maring well known to other anthropologists with his *Pigs for the ancestors* (1969; second edition 1984). In a wider context, Clarke's work was also part of the remarkable outburst of research in the social sciences that took place in Papua New Guinea after the Second World War. According to Clarke's count (p. 140) it ultimately brought at least thirteen field researchers to the fewer than 10,000 Maring.

Clarke's own work took place in 1964-1965, eight years after first contact. He briefly returned in 1970 and 1977. *Place and people*, his revised PhD dissertation, was published in 1971. The eccentricity of the ethnography under review is that it is based on a series of 69 colour photographs that he took during fieldwork. Almost all were taken among the Maring. Although the tropical climate had badly affected them, it was possible to restore them. So Clarke could re-experience the field situation. There is one photograph per A4 page, while the facing pages contain Clarke's reflections, in brief essays. In addition there are notes at the end of the book, some of which are longer than the essays concerned, with further remarks and references to printed

sources. Clarke's gifts as a poet come out in two reflections in poetry. Some of the photographs were printed in black and white in the 1971 book, but the prints in the book under review are a vast improvement on these earlier versions.

The idea of introducing his reflections by means of photographs turns out to be an admirable device. Clarke characterizes his fieldwork experience using Clifford Geertz's expression 'being there'. The reader/viewer gains a vivid impression of this mode of being and, simultaneously, via the texts, of the other source of the fieldworker's scholarly undertaking: the work of his colleagues, his teachers, his peers and his juniors.

Given that Clarke is a geographer, it is striking that he has selected for inclusion a large number of portraits, most often posed ones: 32 as against 18 landscapes. In the essays he addresses, by name, several of the persons pictured. The first picture in the book shows Ngirapu, a major fieldwork collaborator, about whom he writes: 'much of what Ngirapu taught me found its way into my Ph.D. thesis' (p. 146). The second picture shows Ant'wen, Ngirapu's first wife. With the landscape pictures Clarke very skilfully shows how Maring practice shifting cultivation. He includes both close-up pictures of swidden making and fully grown swiddens, and long-distance photos showing swiddens cleared in what at first sight appears to be primary forest, but which is often regrowth. Several photographs show landscapes in other parts of the highlands to highlight the major differences with Maring agriculture.

While the pictures give a vivid image of what the Maring way of life was like in the 1960s and 1970s, Clarke's reflections range far beyond. He pays tribute to his university teachers Clarence Glacken and Carl Sauer, who attuned him to his research issues. He discusses the peripheral position of the Maring in a weak state such as Papua New Guinea and in a world preoccupied with economic development. He shows his concerns over issues that have been foci for his scholarship throughout his career, namely the threats to biodiversity and sustainability, while explicitly acknowledging the question: 'whose biodiversity is it, anyway?' (p. 138). The links that Clarke establishes between local data, obtained during intensive field research among a tiny group of people, and national and global issues make the book most worthwhile.

Clarke does not idealize the Maring as living in harmony with their environment. Approvingly he quotes Ralph Bulmer: 'The record of the past suggests that traditional Papua New Guinea societies scored more points for adaptation, innovation and development of resources than they did for conservation' (p. 151). Whether he is discussing local or general issues, Clarke's texts are eminently readable. This is another reason that the book deserves a wide readership, outside as well as inside academia.

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Gerco Kroes, *Same hair, different hearts; Semai identity in a Malay context; An analysis of ideas and practices concerning health and illness*. Leiden: Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies (CNWS), Universiteit Leiden, 2002, 188 pp. ISBN 90.5789.069.0. Price: EUR 22.70 (paperback).

NATHAN PORATH

This comparative study of Semai and Malay medical culture is the author's published doctoral thesis. It is based partly on anthropological fieldwork with Western Semai (*orang asli*) of the Lamo Valley, and partly on erudite comparative library literature research on *orang asli* and Malay medical ideas. The chapters of the book can be divided into four parts: the introduction, two chapters on Semai medical ideas, two on Malay medical ideas, and a comparative conclusion.

The aim of the book is to compare ideas about health and illness among the Semai and the Malays, and to see what this comparison can tell us about the interrelationship of the two groups. In the introductory chapter Kroes explores the literature on Semai and Malay cultural origins. He states that the two peoples have different cultural origins but have influenced each other. His question then is to see how the Malays have influenced and transformed the Semai. In the introductory chapter Kroes seems to take a primordial approach to the Semai. For example he proposes that during the first phase of historical contact, the Semai were able to smoothly integrate Malay influences. This suggests that the people who Kroes met were the same as the people two thousand years ago. Kroes does not suggest that the present-day Semai are the outcome of a complex interactive pool in which different social and cultural identities have waxed and waned, developed and disappeared through interaction over time. In fact he seems to downplay this argument, which has been proposed by Benjamin, in favour of Bellwood's model of steady expansion of Austronesian-speaking peoples on the peninsula. Kroes states that Benjamin does not consider a possible 'heterogeneity of origin'. The problem is that Bellwood and Benjamin are writing from different epistemological frames of knowledge. Bellwood writes from the perspective of archaeology and linguistics about peoples of whom we know nothing other than what they have left behind. He is writing about methodologically essentialized cultural and linguistic patterns. Benjamin's focus, by contrast, is on peoples and socio-cultural identities. The Semai are descendants of ancient Austroasiatic-speaking peoples, who through a long process of interaction with other Austroasiatic- and Austronesian-speaking peoples (who were themselves also interacting with alien peoples) emerged as the people we today call Semai. A parallel is the difference between talking about Vikings,

peoples who formed specific sociocultural and linguistic patterns within a particular geographical area at a specific moment of human history, or Swedes. To uncritically connect the data of these two methodological frames of knowledge into a single continuity is nothing more than primordialism.

In the middle chapters of the book the author runs through the various medical terms, concepts and practices of the Semai and Malays. These chapters read like an inventory of Semai and Malay medical concepts and practices, and provide useful summaries for anybody working in this field.

After his presentation of the two medical cultures, Kroes states in his conclusion that 'Semai medical culture can pretty much be defined in terms of variation on elements and themes also found among the surrounding Malays' (p. 165). But notwithstanding all the data he gives in his central chapters, Kroes does not really prove this. The main problem of the book lies in its method of comparison rather than the wealth of data it provides and re-organizes. This problem is partly a matter of language and terminology.

The comparison made by Kroes imposes a rather rigid structural interpretation on the worldviews involved. For example, Kroes refers to one aspect of the belief in the all-embracing soul as a 'superstructure' (p. 140). He contradicts himself when he states that the 'structuring' of the spirit world is similar in both cultures, only to add further down the same page (p. 141) that the spirit world is conceived by the Malays as hierarchical but by the Semai as egalitarian. Although it is valid to make the kind of comparison that Kroes makes, one receives the impression that underlying his comparison is the FAS (field of anthropological study) concept, which was devised for the study of cultural similarities within a single cultural and linguistic area. When applied to a comparison between Austroasiatic- and Austronesian-speaking peoples, it looks rather odd. There are times when one wonders whether Kroes is looking at specific Semai/Malay cultural similarities, or universal elements of human medical beliefs and practices which say nothing about local connections or histories. Much of the comparative cultural evidence which he provides, moreover, suggests significant differences between the two groups. The fact that the Semai seem to utilize a particular state of altered consciousness means that their medical system embeds a culture that generates this specific type of experience and not others. This amounts to a major, radical difference in the fundamentals on which the two medical systems rest, and makes one wonder how the author can state that Semai and Malays share similar systems at all. The Semai/Malay comparison seems even more limiting when one remembers that Semais not only have Malays as their neighbours, but also other *orang asli* groups – a point that Kroes does recognize in his conclusion.

It seems to me that Kroes' comparison is caught somewhere between the data from his own field work with Semai who have undergone strong Malay

influence, and data from the literature on other, less acculturated Semai groups. Often it is difficult to figure out which Semai he is referring to, and this confuses his ethnological and historical discussion. Moreover, the Malay data is drawn from literature that is very diverse in its interpreted representations. In some cases Kroes may be uncritically comparing Semai ideas with scholars' interpretation of Malay ideas.

Kroes' closing comments about shamanic incorporation of foreign cultural elements are very interesting. Kroes makes a distinction between 'Semai-ification' and 'Malayization'. In the former, the Semai group takes the alien element and reinterprets it. In the latter, the Malay element is incorporated as it is. These concepts are not elaborated on, however, and neither are they used as a method of comparison and interpretation. If Kroes had used them in this way, it would have made the comparison themselves clearer.

*Same hair, different hearts* is valuable as a presentation of Semai and Malay medical beliefs and concepts. It is also a contribution to the theme of Malay / *orang asli* cultural relations and social identities.

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Grant Evans (ed.), *Laos; Culture and society*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1999, xi + 313 pp. ISBN 974.87090.4.3 (paperback). Price: THB 750 (or USD 24.95 via University of Washington Press).

GUIDO SPRENGER

Although recent years have seen a number of new studies on Laos, professional research has been scarce. Yet, after decades of isolation, this mostly rural country is slowly opening up to Southeast Asian integration and the West. This edited volume is therefore highly welcomed, as it addresses many of the relevant issues for both Laos and Southeast Asia in general, in inspiring, pointed articles. The thread running through most of them is the question of identity, both national and ethnic. While there is a rich literature on this subject for other Southeast Asian countries, Laos provides a particularly complex situation. The editor, in his introduction, does not hesitate to state that 'the modern state of Laos only exists because of French colonial occupation' (p. 21). Laotian nationalists therefore had to face a multitude of challenges in constructing Laos as a nation-state. The dominant, Buddhist culture of the Lao is so closely related to the wealthier and more powerful neighbour Thailand that fine-grained definitions of Thai-Lao differences become a necessity. On the other hand, about half of the population are not ethnic Lao, but belong to one of the other 46 (to use the official figure) ethnic groups, posing another challenge to the definition of the state as a cultural unity.

Migration further complicates the picture. During the Second Indochinese War and after the communist revolution of 1975, large numbers of people left to form communities in France or the United States. Other groups have migrated into Laos as a result of earlier conflicts, for example in Southern China during the nineteenth century.

The volume manages to address a broad range of subjects relating to the identity question. The articles by Ivarsson and Enfield show how linguistic reform became an issue of national identity formation when it aimed at differentiating the Lao language from the Thai. On the other hand, Peter Koret demonstrates how Thai notions of literary analysis influenced Lao perceptions of their own literary traditions despite being essentially inapplicable to those traditions. Thai scholarship was designed to analyse court poetry, while Lao texts were used in rituals performed in village monasteries. An article by Evans, meanwhile, demonstrates that another mode of Laotian self-perception, regarding ethnic minorities, was borrowed from Vietnam, Laos's closest ally in the revolutionary struggle and the place where the first Laotian anthropologists were educated.

Yet it is these minorities that are most intricately concerned with the delineation of identities within Laos. The situation described in another article by the editor provides a typical example of interethnic relations in many parts of Laos. The Black Tai, whose Buddhist society is relatively close to the dominant Lao model, themselves function as a model of development for the Sing Moon, a neighboring Mon-Khmer speaking group. Although Evans stresses the Tai-ization of the Mon-Khmer group, his analysis also suggests that it retains its distinctiveness, due to differences in social organization. A similar hierarchical relation between marginalized Mon-Khmer speakers and 'civilized' Tai speakers is articulated in the rituals performed at Luang Prabang, in the past by the King, at the Lao New Year. In her analysis, Ing-Britt Trankell shows how these rituals have become a means to articulate the socio-political changes since the revolution – or rather the way those changes are conceived by the government. Although both articles provide an acute look at the changes underway, they fall somewhat short of describing the cultural systems subject to them. A different situation again holds for those ethnic groups that have immigrated within the last two centuries, such as the Lue of Muang Sing, featured in Khampheng's contribution to the rich literature on Lue identity. The Hmong in particular have often been perceived as dangerous by the government since many of them were involved in the CIA 'secret army'. That the book hardly mentions this prominent group compromises its claim to comprehensiveness.

One way to sidestep the paradoxes of identity formation is the use of a more universalist model, both by the authors and the people they describe. This model is an economic one, explaining social action in terms of oppor-

tunity and profit. Si-ambhaivan's portrait of two refugee families in France shows how cultural identity and the pursuit of economic advantage may conflict. Business opportunities also dominate the portrayal of cross-border women traders in Andrew Walker's chapter from his *Legend of the golden boat* (Richmond: Curzon, 1999). Walker addresses the values enabling women to engage in their business, yet the specific position and form of economic drives in this cultural context remains unexamined – a feature shared with many studies of expanding trade relations that take economy as self-explanatory. But this hardly depreciates the value of this book. It is not only essential reading for any student of one of the least-known countries in Southeast Asia, but also a book of great interest for any scholar interested in nation-building and identity formation in Southeast Asia.

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Dik van der Meulen, *Multatuli; Leven en werk van Eduard Douwes Dekker*. Nijmegen: SUN, 2002, 912 pp. ISBN 90.5875.054.X. Price: EUR 45.00 (hardback).

GERARD TERMORSHUIZEN

Nog maar zo'n twintig jaar geleden werd er steen en been geklaagd over het gebrek aan biografieën van illustere Nederlanders. Sindsdien is er veel veranderd en wordt die schade naarstig ingehaald, onder meer op het gebied van de literatuur. Het kon niet uitblijven dat in die sterk toegenomen belangstelling ook Multatuli zou delen. Na een stuk of wat halve levensbeschrijvingen (van onder anderen E. du Perron, Paul van 't Veer en Hans van Straten) heeft nu ook hij 'wiens voorhoofd de sterren raakte' (woorden van Du Perron) zijn eerste complete biografie gekregen. Het boek van Dik van der Meulen – het was zijn proefschrift – heeft de AKO-literatuurprijs gekregen, en is in de pers met lof overladen. En terecht. Het is een boek waarmee we blij kunnen zijn.

Over Multatuli (pseudoniem van Eduard Douwes Dekker, 1820-1887) was voordat Van der Meulen aan het karwei begon al heel veel bekend. De belangrijkste bron voor die kennis zijn Multatuli's 25 delen *Volledige werken*. Daarnaast hebben tal van aspecten van zijn leven en werk (vaak uitputtende) aandacht gekregen in boeken en artikelen. Onderzoek naar nieuwe, aanvullende informatie was daarom nauwelijks nodig. Maakte dit het Van der Meulen gemakkelijker, hij stond wel voor de veeleisende opgave greep te krijgen op de overstelpende hoeveelheid materiaal, die er sinds 1860 (het jaar waarin de *Max Havelaar* verscheen) door en over Multatuli in geschrifte is geproduceerd. Daarin is hij op bewonderenswaardige wijze geslaagd. Van der Meulen voert een strakke regie, houdt zijn hoofdthema's – Multatuli's

opvattingen over godsdienst en politiek – goed in het vizier, heeft oog voor karakteristieke details, maar laat deze niet ten koste gaan van de helderheid van het betoog. Hij heeft voortdurend de lezer voor ogen, en zo hoort het ook. Wat hij ten slotte heeft neergeschreven, is een consistent beeld van een gecompliceerde persoonlijkheid. Zijn belangrijkste doelstelling daarbij was te laten zien hoe hecht de relatie is tussen het leven en werk van deze invloedrijke en – tot op de dag van vandaag – controversiële auteur.

Wat in het oog springt, is de nuchtere, kritisch-afstandelijke houding van Van der Meulen ten opzichte van zijn onderwerp. En dat bevalt me wel. Zelfs algemeen geldende meningen over Multatuli, van meet af aan een provocateur van de publieke opinie, ontkomen daar niet aan. Multatuli heeft, is zo'n gangbare stelling, grote invloed uitgeoefend op het geestelijke en maatschappelijke leven in het Nederland van de tweede helft van de negentiende eeuw. Maar Van der Meulen merkt er op de eerste de beste bladzijde onder meer over op: 'Of zijn invloed op de vrijdenkers, koloniale bestuurders, sociaal-democraten en letterkundigen werkelijk zo groot was als vaak is gezegd, is een open vraag' (p. 9). Op afstand houdt de schrijver zich ook waar het gaat om het tumultueuze privéleven van Multatuli. Hij geeft de feiten maar laat aan de lezer het oordeel, dat overigens – dus ook voor de auteur – wat zijn naaste familie betreft niet anders kan luiden dan dat Douwes Dekker een ramp van een echtgenoot en vader was.

Die kritisch-afstandelijke manier van kijken en oordelen treft het meest in de bespreking van 'de zaak van Lebak' uit 1856, die ten grondslag heeft gelegen aan de *Max Havelaar*, het boek dat van Multatuli's geschriften de meeste en langst doorwerkende beroering heeft gewekt. Eindeloos – nu al ruim 140 jaar – woedt het debat en geruzie voort tussen voor- en tegenstanders van het optreden van Douwes Dekker in Lebak. Van der Meulen doet daarvan consentieus verslag, geeft de verschillende standpunten, wikt en weegt ze, plaatst er zijn kritische opmerkingen en vraagtekens bij, maar onthoudt zich – sommigen nemen hem dat, zoals verwacht, kwalijk – van een eigen standpunt. Ik vind dat uitstekend: hij houdt zich daarbij boven de partijen en wijkt bovendien niet af van het door het hele boek volgehouden uitgangspunt van de objectieve waarneming.

Het mag na het bovenstaande duidelijk zijn: ik vind Van der Meulens boek een knappe prestatie. Dat wil niet zeggen, dat er hier en daar niet wat mis gaat. Hoe kan het ook anders bij zo'n grootse onderneming als deze. Gezien in het geheel betreft het in het algemeen details. In het algemeen, want bepaald geen detail vind ik het dat Van der Meulen – en ik blijf hier nog even bij de *Max Havelaar* het – door Indonesische historici – aan Multatuli gedane verwijt dat hij in zijn roman de inheemse personages wél, maar de Nederlandse níet bij hun eigen naam noemde, afwijst met het argument dat Multatuli in de uitgave van het boek in 1875 in de aantekeningen de identi-



teit van figuren als Slijmering en Verbrugge prijs gaf. In de aantekeningen, jawel! Maar de hoofdtekst bleef uiteraard ongemoeid, en daar ging en gaat het de critici vanzelfsprekend om. Zo'n kwestie ligt gevoelig in Indonesië! Dat brengt mij tot de wat algemenere kritiek dat Van der Meulen zich onvoldoende heeft georiënteerd in wat ik de Indonesia-centrische literatuur over Multatuli wil noemen. En dat inclusief de Indonesische vertaling van de *Max Havelaar*, waarover Van der Meulen opmerkt dat die vertaling 'weliswaar enkele malen herdrukt is, maar nauwelijks werd besproken'. De werkelijkheid is echter, dat het boek zeven keer werd herdrukt (waarvan één druk, een schooleditie, met een oplage van 10.000) en bij verschijning van de eerste druk (in 1972) een golf van reacties teweegbracht. En dit in een land met een nauwelijks ontwikkelde leescultuur. 'Multatuli leeft in Indonesië', schreef de bekende Indonesische jurist en dichter Han Resink in 1970. Die uitspraak geldt nog steeds.

Een biograaf is historicus. In zijn Inleiding schetst Van der Meulen de problemen van de biograaf-historicus bij zijn zoektocht naar het verleden. Bij dat verleden, erkent hij, komt deze nooit en te nimmer. Wél dichterbij. In welke mate dit laatste het geval zal zijn, hangt af van zijn werk- én verbeeldingskracht, waarbij het ene niet minder belangrijk is dan het ander. Welnu, Van der Meulen heeft er alles aan gedaan om de feitelijkheden betreffende Multatuli's leven en werk – in hun maatschappelijke context – op tafel te brengen. En hij heeft ten slotte kans gezien dit alles in een vloeiend en levendig betoog voor het voetlicht te brengen. Zijn biografie is deze grote negentiende-eeuwer waardig.

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Karl Benediktsson, *Harvesting development; The construction of fresh food markets in Papua New Guinea*. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies/Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002, xii + 308 pp. ISBN 87.87062.92.5, price GBP 40.00 (hardback), 87.87062.91.7, GBP 17.99 (paperback).

PAIGE WEST

*Harvesting development* is an important addition to the ethnographic literature concerned with Papua New Guinea, globalization, and commoditization. In it, Benediktsson examines the social and commodity networks that link rural people to urban markets. He does so through the macro-analysis of the Gamizuho people and their connections to the fresh vegetable markets in Goroka town and other sites in the Asaro Valley, and the micro-analysis of Kasena village and *kaukau* (*Ipomoea batatas*), the sweet potato.

The book has nine chapters, beginning with an introduction which lays out the ethnographic area in which the author works and a second chapter that constructs a theoretical argument about the relationship between actors, markets, and commodities as they related to traditional understandings and practices of exchange and social relations. The third chapter, the book's most richly ethnographic, traces the individual lives of men and women who participant in the commodity networks that link Kasena and urban markets. Chapters 4 and 5 locate Benediktsson's theory and ethnography within the larger political economy of the Eastern Highlands Province and the nation of Papua New Guinea. Chapter 6, a truly remarkable social and ecological history of the sweet potato, in addition to tracing the movement of the tuber from the West Indies to the rest of the world, examines the economic and subsistence import of the tuber historically in New Guinea and the slow process of its commoditization. Chapter 7, a data-rich chapter, demonstrates the economics of production, distribution and consumption. Chapter 8 locates the sweet potato and its cultivation and commoditization with regard to the Gamizuho within the literature about land tenure in the Pacific. And finally, Chapter 9 analyses the neoliberal ideology that markets and market access will ultimately lead to economic and social development.

The book's major strengths are its theoretical frame, its extensive presentation of ethnographic and economic data concerning production, consumption and distribution, its spatial analysis of markets and the flows of people and commodities between places through time and space, and the author's commitment to a nuanced reading of what development means. In addition, the book, unlike many other ethnographies about Papua New Guinea, takes the time to describe the country's urban centers. I would have liked to have seen more discussion of the ways in which the Gamizuho people with whom the author worked understand the meanings of things and social relations. I did not get a feel for the sweet potato as a cultural object, or of towns as cultural objects. Nor did I feel like I understood what sorts of ideological changes must take place for sweet potatoes – which have deep cultural meaning across the island – to become commodities. The analysis of this process as an economic and historic process was richly described, but the description of it as a social process left me wanting more. But this is a minor critique. The book is theoretically and ethnographically rich and very clearly written. It would be perfect for courses on commodities and consumption, economic anthropology, the anthropology of globalization, development, and, of course, the ethnography of Papua New Guinea.

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Amirul Hadi, *Islam and state in Sumatra; A study of seventeenth-century Aceh*. Leiden: Brill, 2004, xiii + 273 pp. [Islamic History and Civilization, 48.] ISBN 90.04.12982.0. Price: EUR 92.00 (hardback).

EDWIN WIERINGA

The history of the seventeenth-century sultanate of Aceh has been thoroughly studied by such scholars as Snouck Hurgronje, Schrieke, Lombard, Ito and Reid, to mention but a few names. In this reworked version of his 1999 McGill University doctoral dissertation, Amirul Hadi, currently a lecturer in Arabic and Islamic history at the State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) Ar-Raniri in Banda Aceh, concentrates on the Islamic character of the Acehnese state in its golden age. The book is divided into five chapters. The first chapter can be seen as a prelude, providing a historical sketch of the rise of Aceh prior to the seventeenth century (pp. 11-36). Densely packed with names and dates, it seems that the author wished to incorporate into this chapter as much as possible of his 1992 MA thesis on the struggle of Islam in sixteenth-century Aceh, whereas a much more shortened account would have sufficed.

The second chapter examines the Acehnese concept of kingship and the problem of authority (pp. 37-93). As Aceh was ruled by four successive queens for the greater part of the seventeenth century (1641-1699), the controversial issue of female rule forms a most interesting topic for discussion. Following Reid's hypothesis, Amirul Hadi suggests that the *orang kaya* or highest dignitaries possibly favoured the female alternative in an attempt to curb centralizing kingly power. In his discussion of the *Tajussalatin* on this point, however, an additional argument could have been mentioned which lends further credence to this idea. As the *Tajussalatin* makes it incumbent upon a female ruler always to follow the views of her close advisers (that is, the *orang kaya*) because, as the text of the 1827 Roorda van Eijsinga edition (p. 65) puts it, 'budi perempuan itu tiada sampai mengerti akan barang arti yang sukar', the danger of absolutism could, at least theoretically, be averted. The question of whether there were no eligible male candidates for nearly sixty years, so that female rule simply had to be accepted as an exceptional 'temporary solution', cannot be answered due to insufficient data.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the royal compound and the religious ceremonies (pp. 94-146). Again and again Amirul Hadi reminds us that on these topics, too, the available information, either in indigenous texts or European sources, is scanty. For his discussion of the religious ceremonies he draws heavily on a manuscript of the *Adat Aceh*, reproduced in facsimile by Drewes and Voorhoeve in 1958. Concerning the role of the *biduanda* at royal audiences, he refers to the term *pancara*, which he understands as 'the master of the audi-

ence'. In a footnote (p. 112, note 92) more information is promised later on, but the matter is in fact not pursued any further. In the facsimile edition of the *Adat Aceh* (p. 22a), however, the term is spelt p-n-j-a-r, and in transliteration the episode reads: 'Kelima perkara syarat dalamnya hendaklah biduanda itu adab dan tertib duduknya pada majelis raja itu nantinya paham dari karena ia p-n-j-a-r daripada majelis raja nantinya paham olehnya karena ia hampir kepada raja [...]'. Now, in *Jawi* dictionaries p-n-j-a-r is transliterated as *penjara*, but perhaps we should think here of *penjuru*, which in Classical Malay is not an uncommon rendition of Arabic *rukn* or pillar.

Chapter 4 discusses Islamic institutions and the state, dealing with the *ulama* and the state, *adat* and Islamic law, and *jihad* (pp. 147-204) – once again a difficult task due to a dearth of information. The relatively large section on *jihad* is basically a discussion of the so-called *Hikayat Malem Dagang*, an Acehese literary text that is commonly considered to date from the latter part of the seventeenth century. Unfortunately, Amirul Hadi fails to address a tricky problem which in my view constitutes the most intriguing question of this particular text: the story sings the praises of the eponymous admiral Malem Dagang, whereas the great ruler Iskandar Muda comes off rather badly. In a study that purports to inquire into the concept of kingship, the author's failure to consider adequately this *crux interpretum* represents a sadly missed chance.

But then I feel that in general Amirul Hadi rather naively believes that both European and indigenous sources are usable at face value. For example, whereas Ito questioned Beaulieu's contemporary description on one particular point, Amirul Hadi rebukes Ito, stating that the latter's analysis 'risks distorting a valuable eyewitness account'. 'It should be remembered', our author writes (p. 164), 'that the picture drawn by Beaulieu is based on what he witnessed personally and is not interpretive. As such, there is no reason to believe it was tainted by personal bias and, hence, [it?] can be accepted more or less at face value.' Such a rock-solid conviction about the feasibility of an objective or absolute standpoint is rather extreme to say the least, even judged by the standards of Rankian historians. Concerning the indigenous sources, categorized as 'traditional historical literature', Amirul Hadi states that such writings 'contain historical materials interspersed with myths, legends, fairy tales and didactic elements' (p. 4). Leaving out of the discussion the rather pointless classification of neatly distinguished different 'elements' and their biased labelling as legends, fairy tales and the like (in other words, historically useless 'elements'), I would rather argue the opposite point of view: that the so-called 'historical materials' constitute the 'interspersed' elements within a broader narrative.

Amirul Hadi is an old-fashioned historian favouring a 'no-nonsense' approach, in which fact-finding is considered to be of paramount importance,

paying little attention to particular standpoints and perspectives. Hence he believes that the picture drawn in the *Adat Aceh* (91a-92b) of the crowds watching the spectacular procession of Iskandar Muda going to the mosque during a religious festival represents an objective account of genuine 'history'. Amirul Hadi relates that some pregnant women gave birth in the streets and the market places, while 'others' were lost in the crowd (p. 146), thereby revealing his unfamiliarity with this and similar stock passages in Classical Malay literature. Yet the text itself explicitly mentions that to the storyteller ('maka kata yang empunya ceritera ini') the whole procession 'adalah seperti kelakuan Raja Iskandar Dzulkarnain' (*Adat Aceh*, p. 91a). Can this, then, be viewed as yet another valuable eyewitness account, one which is not in any way interpretive?

Chapter 5 looks briefly at two other Muslim states in the region: fifteenth-century Melaka, a coastal Malay sultanate, and seventeenth-century Mataram, an inland Javanese sultanate (pp. 205-40). For Melaka the so-called *Sejarah Melayu* and the *Undang-undang Melaka* are the most important sources used, whereas the discussion of Mataram leans heavily on Moertono's ideal type analysis of Javanese statecraft. In his discussion of the *Undang-undang Melaka*, however, Amirul Hadi unfortunately repeats several misinterpretations on the part of its editor Liaw Yock Fang which had already been scrutinized in a lengthy review by Drewes in 1980 (*Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 53:23-49). Following Liaw Yock Fang's lead, for example, Amirul Hadi erroneously thinks that in article 5.3 on 'the killing of a paramour' it is 'the husband of an adulteress' who gets killed, whereas in actual fact, as Drewes correctly pointed out, this happened to the paramour – the topic of the paragraph in question – and not the cuckold. In comparing seventeenth-century Aceh to Melaka and Mataram, Amirul Hadi argues that the Islamic character of the Acehnese state was more pronounced: 'Aceh, which was neither the heir to any ancient higher culture nor an inland state, showed itself to be more prone to Islamic influence' (p. 247).

In the Conclusion (pp. 241-7) the contents of the book are finally summarized. Assembling the current knowledge of Aceh during its golden age, this is a highly informative work on the place of Islam in a seventeenth-century state in Sumatra. But as long as our understanding of such important primary sources as the *Adat Aceh* or the *Undang-undang Melaka* has still not moved beyond the bare essentials of philological spadework, historical 'fact-finding' will remain speculative at best.

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Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern, *Remaking the world; Myth, mining and ritual change among the Duna of Papua New Guinea*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002, xvi + 219 pp. [Smithsonian Series in Ethnographic Enquiry.] ISBN 1.588.34012.0. Price: GBP 39.00 (hardback).

ROBIN WILSON

This 2002 volume provides a wide-ranging tour around the interrelated history, myth and ritual of the Duna people, containing information that powerfully brings alive for us the contemporary lives of people in Highland Papua New Guinea. The primary question that Stewart and Strathern ask is how the Duna use pre-Christian ritual practices to maintain their relationship with ancestral lands while constructing a social idea of modernity through an articulation between mythical and historical consciousness.

In writing their ethnography, the authors are interested in how the Duna people understand social change, and their ongoing and intimate relationship with their environment. They portray the Duna's relationship between the physical world and the wider cosmos as being re-worked and re-thought through the ritual renewal practice they call *rindi kiniya*. The ritual's primary purpose is repairing 'all kinds of problems, from those within the human body to those in the whole cosmos', and is literally translated as 'straightening the ground' (p. ix). A rapidly changing physical, cultural and political environment reflects the Duna's post-colonial incorporation into the nation-state of Papua New Guinea, the nearby development of natural resource extraction at Porgera and Ok Tedi, and changing Christian missiological and eschatological beliefs. Pre-Christian 'traditional' ritual practices believed to sustain the environment and the position of the Duna within it are not portrayed as an unchanging mechanism, but as creative and dynamically changing practices designed to develop and maintain self-identity in the face of pressures from the outside world, and to cope with the internal pressures that result.

In Chapter 1, kinship and social organization are used to explain contemporary linkages between history, myth and experience, and landscape and spirits, and to give a general account of the role of ritual genealogical narratives and *malu* origin stories. In Chapter 2, the authors deal with Duna ideas about origins encapsulated in specific *malu* stories relating the links between spirits and humans and reinforcing the primacy of agnatic descent lines in the control of land and resources. Chapter 3 develops the idea of *tama* ancestral spirits that define the Duna cosmos. The 'sacred landscape' is discussed in detail with reference to the stones of power (*auwi*) which mark cult sites both as physical objects and as spiritual manifestations of the spirits of the dead, to whom sacrifice is part of the reciprocity that enables the world to renew itself.

Chapter 4 discusses the purpose of the *rindi kiniya* rituals of remaking and renewal and the ongoing co-dependence of humans and the land. Chapter 5 concludes the outline of the key aspects of Duna culture and society by discussing the *Payame Ima*, a prominent and powerful female spirit related in Duma cosmology to the Strickland River and to forest plants and game, which has re-emerged despite church discouragement of indigenous rituals.

Having dealt in the first four chapters with the Duna's past, Stewart and Strathern go on in the next five chapters to explain how the Duna's mythical consciousness informs the development of historical consciousness that places the people within a global framework represented locally by mining, colonialism and missionary activity. Chapter 6 explores how Christianity and its rituals came into local people's lives and how characteristics similar to those of indigenous *tamu*, spirits connected with Duma cosmology, came to be attributed to the first colonial explorers. Chapter 7 describes the development of the open-cast Porgera and Ok Tedi mines on the peripheries of the Duna's territory, and the re-conceptualization of *malu* stories in the light of new transactions and conflicts surrounding land ownership and the various benefits stemming from the mines. Chapter 8 deals with a specific story involving the Duna idea of sacrifice, and Chapter 9 concludes that contemporary social concerns and development activities are informed by dynamic re-examination of origin myths, historical consciousness, and linkages between landscape and spirits.

While the authors are not the first to challenge the conventional view that modernity and globalization mean 'a gradual homogenization of social values and practices throughout the world', this book is successful at conveying the creative translation of modernity into indigenous life worlds by the people themselves. If *Remaking the world* has a shortcoming, it is a tendency not to reflect sufficiently on local people's approaches to anthropological research in the highly politicized atmosphere of mine-affected areas in PNG. While transcriptions of myths are abundant in the text, there is less reflection on how the informants might have understood the enquiries. This sometimes gives the impression that the volume is in some ways a traditional ethnography struggling to come to grips with the multiple 'knowledges' needed by authors when writing about a rapidly globalizing environment. Nevertheless, *Remaking the world* makes a strong and stimulating contribution to Pacific ethnography which should appeal to the seasoned Melanesianist and the undergraduate newcomer alike.

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